

# Exhibit 4

# ROSS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

February 1, 2016



**ROSS UNIVERSITY**  
SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

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# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine (“RUSVM” or the “University”) publishes this Student Handbook for ALL its students.

Effective November 12, 2015, the terms of this Student Handbook are binding upon all students enrolled at RUSVM, collectively referred to as RUSVM students, including students enrolled in the Veterinary Preparatory Program (Vet Prep), DVM students, postgraduate students<sup>1</sup>, students on leave of absence from the University, and students who are visiting at other veterinary schools for clinical education, postgraduate students conducting research off-campus and postgraduate students enrolled in degree programs delivered online.

DVM students in the clinical curriculum or postgraduate students undertaking part of their degree programs at host institutions are required and expected to comply with the policies and procedures of the affiliated institution they attend, as well as those contained in this Student Handbook.

This Student Handbook is published for the purpose of providing RUSVM students information about policies and procedures that will govern their participation in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program and/or Postgraduate degree programs.

This edition supersedes all previous editions of the Student Handbook. In the event there is a conflict between this Student Handbook and any other University document or information, the terms of this Student Handbook will prevail.

### 1.2 INTERPRETATION AND MODIFICATION

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<sup>1</sup> In the postgraduate policies sections, postgraduate students are referred to as “candidates.”

The Dean, or the Dean's designee, has final authority to determine how the policies and procedures in this Student Handbook are interpreted and applied.

RUSVM reserves the right to change its policies and procedures, course offerings, degree requirements, and other material contained in this Student Handbook, or the Academic Catalog, at any time, with or without notice. Such changes will generally be announced prior to their effective dates. Changes may be disseminated by email, by posting on the campus website or by letters from the Dean and Associate Deans or mailed to students on- and off-campus. Changes generally become effective on the first day of the semester following their announcement, unless otherwise stated.

Students are responsible for staying informed of any changes in policy and procedure by regularly checking the RUSVM website for new or updated documents that contain any changes to RUSVM policies and procedures, course offerings, degree requirements, and other materials, which shall be posted in the form of updated documents on the RUSVM website.

## **1.3 SECURITY**

### **1.3.1. Campus Security**

RUSVM is committed to promoting the security of its students. The cooperation of students, faculty, and staff is essential to a safe campus. Every member of the campus community is encouraged to report any possible crime, suspicious activity, or emergency on campus to the Safety and Security Department, whose duty it is to maintain order and regulate safety. Security is available to provide assistance to students and faculty on- and off-campus.

In accordance with US Department of Education requirements, information about security and safety practices, as well as campus crime statistics are published annually in the *RUSVM Annual Disclosure*. This information is made available to current students and may be obtained by anyone else, including prospective students, upon request, and on the Student Consumer Information website at <http://www.rossu.edu/veterinary-school/student-consumer-info.cfm>.

A mass notification emergency warning system (SIREN) is in place to communicate to the campus community simultaneously by landline and mobile phone, text messaging, and email in the event of an emergency. It is the responsibility of each student to keep his or her contact information, including the student's emergency contact person, current. On-campus students may update their personal profile at any time by accessing their account in MyRoss. Students and visitors should take the same security and safety precautions that they would take in any major city across the world.

### **1.3.2 Housing Security**

It is the mission of RUSVM to provide a relevant and stimulating learning environment to equip veterinary students to become practice and career ready graduates. To help achieve this mission, RUSVM has worked alongside landlords and property managers to establish minimum security



standards with the aim of reducing burglaries and break-ins where our students live off-campus. The properties listed on the RUSVM Housing website (referred henceforth as “listed properties”) have met these standards.

Properties are not listed for a number of reasons, including non-compliance with the RUSVM’s security standards, location (may be in a deserted area or outside of the RUSVM Safety and Security Department patrol zone) or due to past student issues with the landlord or property manager.

To enhance the safety and security of RUSVM students, the University requires all new students and those transitioning out of campus housing to obtain housing in listed properties. The University also requires all other students not living in listed housing to transition to listed housing as soon as practicable, taking into consideration the current contractual obligations they may have in place.

While living in listed properties will not eliminate the risk of an incident, the University believes this course of action is necessary to enhance the safety and security of the RUSVM community members and allow more effective deployment of our security forces.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Alleged failures to comply with this policy shall be investigated and addressed administratively. Violations of this policy will not be subject to review by a conduct panel.

The following shall constitute acceptable proof of student residency should there be any question as to whether a student is living in listed housing:

- Copy of currently effective signed lease, and
- Cancelled check, receipt or other evidence acceptable to RUSVM, in its sole discretion, indicating payment of rent within the past 30 days.

Notification of this policy is being initially published in the September 2015 Student Handbook (“publication date”). Students are on notice as of the publication date that the policy comes into effect January 11, 2016 (“effective date”). Students should make every effort to come into compliance with this policy as soon as practicable prior to the effective date. Students should not enter into new contractual arrangements for housing at non-listed properties after the publication date. Students are prohibited from entering into new contractual arrangements for housing at non-listed properties if such a contract will result in a violation of this policy on or after the effective date. Local residents may be exempt from this policy.

## **1.4 POLICY ON ANIMAL USE IN LABORATORY EXERCISES**

The use of animals in instructional and research activities within RUSVM is strictly regulated by written protocols, designed to ensure the humane treatment of animals under the care of students, staff or faculty. The RUSVM *Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)* regularly review these protocols for compliance with federal regulations outlined under the Animal Welfare Act.

RUSVM follows the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, NRC 2011, 8th Edition*, the *Animal*

*Welfare Act* as implemented by Title IX, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) of the US, the AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia (2007), and any published guidance from the government of St. Kitts as guidelines for standards of care and use of animals.

## **1.5 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES**

### **1.5.1 Network and Responsible Computing Policy**

University-provided technology resources, including, but not limited to, desktop and portable computers, servers, networks, printers, software, and data storage media, email, and Internet use (collectively, technology resources), are available for exclusive use of authorized, registered students, faculty, and staff users. To better serve the needs of users and emulate a corporate computing environment, the following policies are enforced by the Help Desk and Information Technology (IT) staff.

**Users must familiarize themselves with and abide by the following policies:**

#### **1.5.1.1 *Network and Workstation Security is strictly enforced***

- Users have no expectation of privacy in connection with use of the University's technology resources, including creation, entry, receipt, storage, access, viewing, or transmission of data. The University, through the IT staff, may search, monitor, inspect, intercept, review, and/or access all data created, entered, received, stored, accessed, viewed, or transmitted on or through the University's technology resources, or other University-provided technology to maintain system integrity and insure users are using the system responsibly.
- The IT staff may also implement workstation management software, allowing them to monitor for, or prevent users from attempting to change settings or circumvent workstation security.
- Users may not attempt to alter workstation settings including, but not limited to, network configuration, Windows® registry, virus checker settings, or any other setting that might compromise security or performance of the University computer system. The IT staff may implement workstation security software to monitor for, and/or prevent users from making inappropriate changes to their workstations.
- Any attempt by a user to breach workstation or network security, or to tamper with University technology resources, will result in loss of computer access. Downloading material relating to hacking or malicious code creation will be considered an attempt to breach network security.
- Further disciplinary action may be pursued as described below in Section 1.5.1.5, Disciplinary action as a result of violation of IT privileges.

#### **1.5.1.2 *Guidelines for use of the University's technology resources***

- The privacy of other users must be respected.
- Users are instructed to keep their login and password information confidential. Users are

responsible for all activities conducted under their user login and password, whether intentional or unintentional, on the University's technology resources. If a student suspects that someone has gained unauthorized access to his/her user login and password or otherwise accessed his/her account in an unauthorized manner, the student should inform IT staff immediately.

- Usage of any electronic equipment (laptops, tablets, smart phones, etc.) in the classroom other than for class related use is prohibited. A student found in violation of this may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Students will not use the University's technology resources to intentionally or unintentionally violate any local, state, federal, or international civil or criminal law. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Making statements or transmitting data that is threatening, malicious, tortuous, defamatory, libelous, vulgar, obscene, or invasive of another's privacy.
  - Violating copyright, trademark, patent or any other intellectual property laws. This would include transmitting, posting, or copying another user's work without express consent of the intellectual property owner.
  - Running or participating in lotteries, raffles, betting, gambling for anything of value, and participating or facilitating in the distribution of unlawful materials.
  - To gain unauthorized access to other computers or databases not in the public domain.
- Users of the University's technology resources should abide by the same principles of fairness, decency, and respect that would be expected in any other school or business environment.
- Users are forbidden from using the University's technology resources in any way that may be reasonably construed to violate the University's policies, including its no-harassment policies. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, sexually explicit or offensive images, messages, cartoons, jokes, ethnic or religious slurs, racial epithets, and using abusive and offensive language.
- Computer technology resources may not be used to transmit junk mail, SPAM, pyramid schemes of any kind, or chain letters.
- Users must minimize the possibility of transmitting viruses or programs harmful to another user's data or equipment by using an appropriate virus checker.
- Users may not install, store, or download software programs or hardware on University computers. Any unauthorized software or hardware modifications will be removed.
- Off-campus websites and email accounts created or accessed over the University computer network are subject to these policies and regulations.

### **1.5.1.3      *User accounts are available for academic purposes only***

- All technology resources are intended for educational use and may not be used for commercial or other unauthorized purposes. Use of University technology resources – including computers, network facilities, application software, network disk space, and the Internet – are available for the purpose of coursework and support only. Communication using technology resources is available for users only.
- Students are issued an account when they appear on the official class roster. All accounts are for the exclusive use of the person to which they are assigned and may not be "loaned" to anyone. Other types of accounts may be applied for by completing an Account Request form at the Help Desk. A Help Desk assistant will check the user's ID and sign the form indicating the ID was confirmed. All users are given their own space on the network hard drive for storing

course-related material and assignments. They may also receive access to specific software packages based on the judgment of the network administrator.

- All passwords expire every 90 days. The University reserves the right to withdraw access to facilities or the network from any user and all rights to any material stored in files and will remove any harmful, unlawful, abusive, or objectionable material.
- The University does not guarantee functioning of the system will be error-free or uninterrupted. In addition, students are responsible for backing up all their electronic files. The University is not responsible for student files.

#### **1.5.1.4      *Food and beverages are not permitted in labs***

- Food particles and liquids easily damage computer equipment, making systems unavailable and raising costs to users. For example, soda and coffee damage the printed electrical traces of a keyboard on contact, and food crumbs clog mice and keyboards. Therefore, food and beverages are prohibited in computer labs.
- Please keep the following in mind:
  - Drinking is allowed in all classrooms (except those noted below) provided the drink is in a closed-lid container. No open cups, glasses, or soda cans are allowed. Plastic bottles are permitted.
  - Small snacks are allowed in the following areas: classrooms I, II, III, IV, and the auditoriums. Full meals from on-campus food vendors and other establishments are not permitted. Students should be respectful of those around them and not bring foods with strong odors into the classroom.
  - In the Learning Resource Center (LRC), 24 hour reading room, and in the library, only bottled water in a closed “sip top” clear plastic water bottle is allowed.
  - No eating is allowed in the library, LRC, biohazard areas (anatomy/necropsy laboratory, clinics, surgery, multipurpose laboratory, diagnostic and research laboratory), or the 24 hour reading room.
  - No drinking is allowed in the following areas: anatomy/necropsy laboratory, clinics, surgery, multipurpose laboratory, diagnostic and research laboratory.
  - It is incumbent upon each student to clean up after him/herself and not leave any trash behind.

#### **1.5.1.5      *Disciplinary action as a result of violation of IT privileges***

- Access to and use of the University’s technology resources is a privilege, not a right. Users who do not comply with these policies are subject to denial of access to University technology resources and to disciplinary action. The University may amend, revise, or depart from this policy at any time, without prior notice.
- Users who have their accounts disabled should contact the Help Desk to find out who to contact to regain computer access. Minor violations may be resolved by the IT staff.
- Major violations will be referred to the Conduct Board Administrator as a formal complaint under the applicable provisions of the Student Handbook, as described below. (Other portions of the Student Handbook may also apply, depending on the nature of the violation.)

#### **1.5.1.6      *Unauthorized Distribution of Copyrighted Materials***

- The University strives to provide access to varied materials, services, and equipment for students, faculty, and staff and does not knowingly condone policies or practices that constitute an infringement of federal copyright law. Transmitting or downloading any material that you do not have the right to make available and that infringes any patent, trademark, trade secret, copyright or other proprietary rights of any party is prohibited. Installing or distributing pirated or unlicensed software is also forbidden. Violation of these requirements may subject students to Student Handbook violations, civil, and criminal liabilities. Students who violate federal copyright law do so at their own risk.
- Copyright status is applied to a work as soon as it is created. Users should assume that all writings and images are copyrighted.
- The University maintains a campus network to support and enhance the academic and administrative needs of our students, faculty, and staff. The University is required by federal law to make an annual disclosure informing students that illegal distribution of copyrighted materials may lead to civil and/or criminal penalties. The University takes steps to detect and punish users who illegally distribute copyrighted materials. The University reserves the right to suspend or terminate network access to any campus user that violates this policy and network access may be suspended if any use is impacting the operations of the network. Violations may be reported to appropriate authorities for criminal or civil prosecution. The existence and imposition of sanctions does not protect members of the campus community from any legal action by external entities.

#### **1.5.1.7      *Social Media Communications – Best Practices***

- With the rise of new media and next-generation communications tools, the way in which the University communicates internally and externally continues to evolve. While this creates new opportunities for communications and collaboration, it also creates new responsibilities for everyone. The University recognizes its population is very diverse and that students, staff, and faculty may work or take classes in different locations. Staying connected with one's peers can be beneficial both academically and socially, and greatly contribute to student success. That connection may be in person, by email, phone, or instant messaging, or through social networks on the Internet that include but are not limited to Facebook® and MySpace®.
- The University's intent of having a presence in the social media sphere is to facilitate connections between its audiences that participate in relational communication and to enable rapid response messaging in these emerging platforms, however, as this is a new platform for the University, it must ensure that all postings and usage adhere to University policies and, approved content protects the integrity of the University, and maintains the trust of its key constituents. As such, the University retains the sole right to approve and publish all web pages containing information about its educational programs, services, activities on its behalf, student body, recognized student organizations, and body of alumni.

#### **1.5.1.8      *Student Club/Group Web Pages***

- Student groups or individual student web pages on any social media platform, such as MySpace, YouTube™, Facebook, forums, or blogs are not under the University's control. Therefore, they may not be used to promote, voice an opinion of, or recruit for the University in any way. Students must adhere to the Student Handbook when they engage in social media and

mention the University. What applies as appropriate conduct on-campus or during the clinical year (within the entire veterinary curriculum) or in online course shells also applies to conduct on social media platforms.

- The University's intellectual property, including its trademarks, copyrights, logos, and brands, is the exclusive property of the University. It is not to appear on individual or student group web pages or be used by individuals to promote themselves or their ideas and activities without prior written approval.
- Student groups that utilize any of the University intellectual property on their social media pages without prior written approval will be required to remove them immediately.

#### **1.5.1.9      *Student Responsibilities***

- It is important that all students understand their responsibilities when using social media. Please remember that you can have no reasonable expectation of privacy in material that you choose to place online or enter or send through resources provided by the University. Recognize that you are responsible for anything you write or present online, and you may be subject to legal or Student Handbook proceedings by the University and/or others (i.e., other students, employees, and third parties) based on what you write or present online.
- Responsible behavior is expected of all University students when they participate in or partake of social media or blogging. Students' communications, regardless of format, must abide by the Student Handbook. It is not the goal of the University to actively monitor all student communications, however, should the University become aware of inappropriate behavior that may violate the Student Handbook, the behavior may be investigated and addressed per the University's disciplinary procedures outlined in the Student Handbook. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, posting or communication of content that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, infringing of intellectual property rights, or otherwise illegal, inappropriate, or injurious.
- A student found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary actions as follows:
  - ***First Violation***
    - The first time a report of distributing or downloading copyrighted files is received, the person who was using the computer at the given time is notified by the IT Department or its designee of the violation via an email sent to their campus email address. The user must respond within two business days.
    - If the user does not respond within two business days, network access is suspended (the user's network connection is disabled) immediately and until the situation is resolved. Email and other accounts are not disabled. The user is required to submit a signed certification that states that the user understands copyright issues and the ramifications of a subsequent offense or to demonstrate that the notification was unwarranted. Network access will be restored no sooner than two business days after receipt of the certification page. The IT Department or its designee will send notifications via email of violations to the appropriate vice president, Dean, supervisor, sponsor and/or other appropriate personnel. Users who receive notifications of copyright violations are strongly encouraged to review the educational materials located at the campus website: [www.rossu.edu](http://www.rossu.edu).
    - If the user feels the warning is erroneous, he/she must show evidence to the IT Department or its designee that the file(s) was used legally or was not

copyrighted. Notifications of all violations will be maintained by the IT Department. If any notification is shown to be unwarranted, no record of the violation notification is retained.

- ***Second Violation***

- If a second notification of violation is received, network access shall be suspended immediately. The user is again informed of the violation by email from the IT Department or its designee and referred to the Conduct Board Administrator as a formal complaint. Network access is not restored, if at all, until the complaint process is complete. Sanctions may include termination of network access, probation, suspension, or expulsion as deemed appropriate.

The existence and imposition of sanctions does not protect members of the campus community from any legal action by external entities.



**1.5.1.10 Alternatives to Illegal Downloading**

Illegal downloads hurt artists and deters the incentive to create. US laws protect the rights of individuals regarding their own works. Below are lists of sites that offer free or inexpensive products that you can use without violating copyright law.

- Free and Legal

**Clipart**

<http://www.coolarchive.com/>  
<http://www.mediabuilder.com/>  
<http://www.clipart.com/en/>  
<http://www.aaaclipart.com/>  
<http://www.allfree-clipart.com/>  
<http://www.pagesource.com/clipart/>  
<http://www.freegraphics.com/>  
<http://www.iband.com/>  
<http://www.clipartconnection.com>  
<http://www.clipsahoy.com/>  
<http://www.free-graphics.com/>

**Fonts**

<http://www.blambot.com>  
<http://www.fonts.com>  
<http://www.larabiefonts.com/>  
<http://www.fontfreak.com>  
<http://www.acidfonts.com/>  
<http://www.007fonts.com/>  
<http://www.fontfile.com/>  
<http://www.fontsnthings.com/>  
<http://www.abstractfonts.com/fonts/>  
<http://www.fontparadise.com/>  
<http://fonts.tom7.com/>  
<http://www.fontgarden.com/>

**Photos**

<http://www.imageafter.com/>  
<http://www.freefoto.com/>  
<http://www.istockphoto.com/>  
<http://www.photospin.com/>  
<http://www.freeimages.com/>

**Music**

<http://download.cnet.com/windows/>  
<http://www.epitonic.com/>  
<http://www.betterpropaganda.com/>

Radio Stations <http://www.accuradio.com/>

**Not Free, But Legal****Movies**

<http://www.movielink.com/>  
<http://us.cinemanow.com/>  
<http://www.movieflix.com/>

**Music**

<http://www.iTunes.com/>  
<http://www.MusicMatch.com/>  
<http://www.rhapsody.com/>  
<http://www.napster.com/>  
<http://music.msn.com/>  
<http://www.connect.com/>  
<http://www.buymusic.com/>  
<http://www.emusic.com/>



## 1.6 CODE OF CONDUCT

### 1.6.1 Purpose

RUSVM strongly supports the rights of each student to study and work in a quiet, respectful, and nonviolent atmosphere that is conducive to the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. Each member of the RUSVM community is expected to assume responsibility for creating an environment conducive to fulfilling such a goal.

The Dean and the Dean's designees, reserve the right to initiate and enforce policies and procedures intended to enhance this philosophy, and which they judge necessary to preserve the educational goals and mission of RUSVM. Students and their guests are required to comply with these policies and procedures. By applying to and/or accepting admission, enrolling and/or attending classes, or availing themselves of any RUSVM services, RUSVM students voluntarily indicate their decision to behave within the norms set forth by the University. Any person not willing to live within these norms should expect disciplinary action by the University. The Code of Conduct applies to any covered person as that term is defined in the Code.

#### **1.6.1.1. Definitions**

2. The terms "University" or "RUSVM" means Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine.
3. The term "covered person" includes any RUSVM student, (either full-time or part-time, either onsite or online, and including but not limited to students who take time off between terms), receiving or seeking to receive services from the University, or otherwise pursuing studies at the University.
4. The term "faculty member" means any person hired by or contracted with the University to conduct instructional activities.
5. The term "Staff" means any person employed by the University.
6. The term "member of the RUSVM community" includes students, faculty members or staff, and any other individuals associated with the University. The Conduct Administrator shall determine a person's status in a particular situation.
7. The term "RUSVM premises" includes all land, buildings, facilities, student housing and other property in the possession of or owned, used, or controlled by the University (including parking lots, adjacent streets and sidewalks).
8. The term "conduct panel" means any person or persons authorized by the Conduct Administrator or designee to determine whether a respondent has violated the Code of Conduct and to recommend imposition of sanctions.
9. The term "Conduct Administrator" means an RUSVM official authorized by the University to manage Code of Conduct proceedings and/or impose sanctions upon respondents found to have violated the Code of Conduct. A Conduct Administrator may serve simultaneously as a Conduct Administrator, and as the sole member or one of the members of the conduct panel. Nothing shall prevent the University from authorizing the same Conduct Administrator to impose sanctions in all cases at a particular location or locations.
10. The term "policy" is defined as the policies, rules and procedures of the University including, but not limited to, those found in the student handbook, housing handbook and academic catalogs.
11. The term "organization" means any number of persons who have complied with the formal

requirements for University recognition/registration as an organization.

### **1.6.2 Jurisdiction**

The Code of Conduct applies to behavior that affects the RUSVM community, irrespective of where or when that conduct may occur. Discipline may extend to off-campus activities and locations (including but not limited to off-campus activities, events, and housing) when the actions in question adversely affect the RUSVM community and/or pursuit of its objectives.

The RUSVM standards of conduct for students shall apply to:

- Conduct that occurs on RUSVM premises, at RUSVM sponsored activities, and off-campus;
- Conduct that affects the RUSVM community and/or the pursuit of its objectives;
- Conduct that occurs while the student is pursuing their studies in the clinical year;
- Conduct that occurs in an online or virtual forum.

Students are reminded that they are also subject to the same local laws as are other citizens and residents of St. Kitts and Nevis. RUSVM is not a sanctuary from these laws.

### **1.6.3 Code of Conduct – Rules and Regulations**

Any respondent found to have committed misconduct, including the following types of misconduct, may be subject to disciplinary sanctions outlined in Section 1.8 Complaints Concerning Student Conduct and Disciplinary Proceedings.

1. Acts of dishonesty including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a) Furnishing false information to any University official, faculty member or office.
  - b) Forgery, alteration or misuse of any University document, record or instrument of identification.
  - c) Computer piracy, including duplication of computer software, copyright infringement and unauthorized computer entry.
2. Disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings and other University activities, including its public service functions on or off campus, or other authorized non-University activities, when the act occurs on RUSVM premises.
3. Physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, and harassment including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, coercion and/or other conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person, either on or off RUSVM premises or at any University-sponsored activity.
4. Bullying and cyberbullying, which is using one's power to control or harm individuals who cannot defend themselves including, but not limited to, face-to-face interactions and any electronic communication (communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager) whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents.
5. Attempted or actual theft of and/or damage to property of the University or property of a member of the RUSVM community or other personal or public property.
6. RUSVM specifically prohibits any organization, chartered or otherwise, officially or in fact, from participating in the activity of "hazing," defined as any action taken or situation created which, regardless of intent or consent of the participants, may reasonably produce bodily harm or danger, mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, fright,

humiliation or ridicule, or otherwise compromises the dignity of an individual; compels an individual to participate in an activity that is unlawful and or contrary to University rules, policies and regulations; will unreasonably or unusually impair an individual's academic efforts, and/or occurs on or off campus. Hazing is further defined as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or removes public or private property, for the purpose of initiation or admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for, continued membership in a group or organization.

Such activities and/or actions prohibited include, but are not limited to: tests of endurance; submission of members or prospective members to potentially dangerous or hazardous circumstances; any activity that by its nature is so intense that it would cause severe mental anxiety, mental distress, panic, human degradation or public embarrassment; creation of excessive fatigue or a late work session that interferes with scholastic activities or deprives persons of the opportunity for sufficient sleep (six hours per day), decent edible meals and/or access to means of bodily cleanliness; forcing or coercing a person to consume alcohol or other substances, in any amount; any requirement that compels an individual to participate in an activity that is illegal, perverse or indecent; and compelling individuals to engage in sexual behaviors, sexual or racial harassment or slurs, or exhibitionism.

7. Violation of conduct guidelines, including those in student leases and housing handbooks, applicable to University-controlled housing.
8. Gambling on RUSVM premises, at University functions or through the use of University equipment.
9. Failure to comply with directions of University officials or law enforcement officers acting in performance of their duties and/or failure to identify oneself to these persons when requested to do so.
10. Unauthorized possession, duplication or use of keys, or unauthorized entry to or use of premises.
11. Violation of published University policies, procedures, rules or regulations.
12. Violation of any applicable federal, state or local law.
13. Use, possession or distribution of narcotic or other controlled substances, except as expressly permitted by law, a valid doctor's order, and the University, or being under the influence of such substances. Please note in particular that even where otherwise permitted under local law, marijuana use, possession, or influence on University premises, at University events, or that adversely affects the RUSVM community, is prohibited.
14. Use, possession or distribution of alcoholic beverages, except as expressly permitted by law and University regulation; or public intoxication.
15. Illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, other weapons or dangerous chemicals.
16. Participation in a demonstration that disrupts normal operations of the University or infringes on rights of other members of the RUSVM community; leading or inciting others to disrupt the scheduled and/or normal activities within any University building or area; intentional obstruction that is unreasonable and interferes with freedom of movement and/or free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
17. Conduct that is disorderly, disruptive, lewd or indecent; breach of peace; or aiding, abetting or procuring another person to breach the peace.
18. Aiding, abetting or inducing another to engage in behavior prohibited by the Code of Conduct.
19. Theft or other abuse of computer time, including but not limited to:
  - a. Unauthorized entry into a file, to use, read or change contents, or for any other purpose

- b. Unauthorized transfer of a file.
  - c. Unauthorized use of another individual's identification and password.
  - d. Use of computing facilities to interfere with work of another student, faculty member or University official.
  - e. Use of computing facilities to send obscene or abusive messages.
  - f. Use of computing facilities to interfere with normal operation of the University computing system.
  - g. Introduction, reproduction and/or promulgation of any computer virus.
20. Abuse of the disciplinary system, including, but not limited to:
- a. Falsification, distortion or misrepresentation of information before a conduct panel.
  - b. Disruption or interference with orderly conduct of a conduct proceeding.
  - c. Knowingly instituting complaint or conduct proceedings without good cause.
  - d. Attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the complaint or conduct procedures.
  - e. Attempting to influence the impartiality of a member of a conduct panel prior to, and/or during, the course of the conduct proceeding.
  - f. Harassment (verbal or physical) and/or intimidation by a student of a participant in the conduct or complaint processes prior to, during and/or after a conduct proceeding.
  - g. Failure to comply with sanction(s) imposed under the Code of Conduct.
  - h. Influencing or attempting to influence another person to commit an abuse of the conduct or complaint procedures.

## **1.7 HONOR CODE**

It is the student's responsibility to understand the Honor Code. Ignorance of its content does not constitute an excuse. A violation of the Honor Code is considered a violation of the Code of Conduct. Specific violations are as follows:

- Any acts of academic dishonesty pertaining to any quiz, examination or assignment;
- Giving or receiving aid during examinations or assignments. It shall be the responsibility of each student to determine whether it is permissible to obtain assistance with assigned work;
- Engaging in any facet of human medicine or surgery or performing veterinary medical or surgical tasks without direct supervision and/or approval of a faculty veterinarian;
- Falsifying clinic records, or neglecting or abusing any animal;
- Stealing, damaging, defacing, or, without authority, diverting for one's own use any property of RUSVM, or someone else's personal property;
- Any act that may undermine RUSVM's relationship with the government or people of St. Kitts and Nevis and place in jeopardy other students' privilege to study in St. Kitts;
- Intentionally supplying false information to a faculty member, a RUSVM committee member, or member of the administration;
- Violation of another student's right to privacy by divulging information regarding Disciplinary Board proceedings;
- Failure to report known acts of academic or professional dishonesty; or committing unprofessional conduct as defined in the American Veterinary Medical Association Code of Ethics.



## **1.8 COMPLAINTS CONCERNING STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS**

### **1.8.1 Conduct Administrator and Conduct Panel**

1. The Conduct Administrator shall determine the composition of conduct panels and determine which conduct panel shall be authorized to hear each case. Where a multi-person panel is used instead of hearing by a Conduct Administrator, the conduct panel shall include, at minimum, three members of the RUSVM community.
2. The Conduct Administrator shall develop procedures for administration of the Code of Conduct and for conducting hearings which are consistent with the provisions of this Code of Conduct.
3. Decisions made by a conduct panel and/or Conduct Administrator shall be final, pending the appeal process.
4. In appropriate situations, the conduct panel and/or Conduct Administrator may also provide a respondent who is subject to the hearing process with referral information for external counseling or other services available within the greater community that may help the respondent to ameliorate his/her conduct to prevent further violations of the Code of Conduct or University policy.

### **1.8.2 Involvement of Law Enforcement or External Judicial Authorities**

Complainants who believe that they are victims of crime or other violation of law (for example, assault, battery, sexual misconduct) may notify and seek assistance from the University, local law enforcement and/or other community resources concurrently. The Conduct Administrator can provide information about how to contact local law enforcement or other local community resources.

The University is committed to maintaining an environment that is safe for all members of the RUSVM community. Safety concerns, including those arising out of Code of Conduct proceedings, should be brought to the attention of the Director of Safety and Security, Campus Incident Commander or the Conduct Administrator for evaluation of any appropriate measures to be taken by the University to promote security. Complainants may also choose to seek protective, restraining, or “no-contact” orders from an external law enforcement or judicial authority; complainants who do so should notify the director of safety and security, Conduct Administrator or Campus Incident Commander so that the University can cooperate as appropriate in the observation of the order.

The University may institute Code of Conduct proceedings against a respondent charged with violation of applicable law without regard to the pendency of civil litigation or criminal arrest and prosecution. Proceedings under the Code of Conduct may be carried out prior to, simultaneously with, or following civil or criminal proceedings.

If the alleged violation of law is also the subject of Code of Conduct proceedings, the University may advise external authorities of the existence and status of the Code of Conduct proceedings. The

University cooperates fully with law enforcement and other agencies in enforcing law on University property and in the conditions imposed by criminal courts for the protection of victims and the rehabilitation of violators. Individual students, staff, or faculty members, acting in their personal capacities, remain free to interact with a governmental representative or law enforcement official as they deem appropriate.

### **1.8.3 Disciplinary Procedures - Charges and Hearings**

1. Any member of the RUSVM community or the University itself may file charges against any covered person for misconduct. In instances where community safety is a concern, notice of a possible violation may result in charges being filed by the University whether or not the impacted community member wishes to proceed. Charges shall be prepared in writing and directed to the Conduct Administrator at the appropriate University location. Any charge should be submitted as soon as possible after the event takes place.
2. Once charges have been filed, the Conduct Administrator will investigate to determine if charges have merit and/or if they can be resolved by mutual consent of the complainant and the respondent on a basis acceptable to the Conduct Administrator (such as mediation). The Conduct Administrator may also issue a conduct warning to a respondent or complainant where a charge is resolved by mutual consent. If charges cannot be disposed of by mutual consent, the Conduct Administrator may later hold the hearing, either individually or as a member of the conduct panel. Mediation will not be used for charges involving alleged sexual misconduct.
3. All charges shall be presented to the respondent in writing, in which a date and time is set for a hearing within a timeframe reasonable under the circumstances, usually not less than two, nor more than 15 calendar days after the respondent has been notified of the charges. The timeframe for scheduling of hearings may be extended at the discretion of the Conduct Administrator.
4. The Conduct Administrator may choose to hold the hearing him/herself, or may require a hearing by the full conduct panel when he/she believes that such a procedure is in the best interest of the University. If either the complainant or the respondent believes that a member of the conduct panel has a conflict of interest, he or she should bring this concern to the attention of the Conduct Administrator, or if the alleged conflict is held by the Conduct Administrator to the attention of the location's Complaint Administrator (as identified in the Student Complaint Procedure published in this Student Handbook).
5. Hearings shall be held by a conduct panel according to the following guidelines:
  - a. The Conduct Administrator should serve as chairperson of the conduct panel, assuming no conflict of interest exists.
  - b. Hearings shall be held in private. Admission of any person to the hearing shall be at the discretion of the Conduct Administrator/chairperson.
  - c. In advance of the hearing, both the complainant and respondent will be given access to the identified information that is available before the hearing which will be considered



- by the conduct panel.
- d. The complainant and respondent have the right to be assisted by any advisor they choose, at their own expense. The advisor may be an attorney. The complainant and respondent are responsible for presenting his/her own case and, therefore, advisors are not permitted to speak or to participate directly in any hearing before a conduct panel. The complainant and respondent must provide the names (relationship and title, if applicable) of those attending the hearing with them at least one business day before the hearing.
  - e. The University, the complainant, the respondent and the conduct panel shall be allowed to present witnesses, subject to the right of cross-examination by the conduct panel.
  - f. Pertinent records, exhibits including video and written statements may be accepted as evidence for consideration by a conduct panel at the discretion of the Conduct Administrator/chairperson.
  - g. All procedural questions are subject to the final decision of the Conduct Administrator/chairperson.
  - h. After the hearing, the conduct panel shall deliberate in private and determine (by majority vote for a multi-person conduct panel) whether the respondent has violated the Code of Conduct.
  - i. The conduct panel's determination shall be made on the basis of whether it is more likely than not that the respondent violated the Code of Conduct.
6. There shall be a single record, such as an audio recording, of all hearings before a conduct panel or Conduct Administrator. The record shall be the property of the University. Suspensions and expulsions will be noted in the respondent's academic file.
  7. No respondent may be found to have violated the Code of Conduct solely because the respondent failed to appear before a conduct panel. Even if the respondent does not appear, the evidence in support of the charges shall be presented and considered. Likewise, a respondent may be found to have violated the Code of Conduct even in instances where the complainant has not participated in the conduct proceedings.
  8. The Complaint Administrator shall notify the respondent of the outcome in writing, and in appropriate cases, shall also notify the complainant. In cases of sexual misconduct allegations, the complainant and respondent will be informed simultaneously. Where safety concerns exist, the complainant may be given appropriate notice prior to formal notification.

#### **1.8.4 Sanctions**

1. The sanctions listed below may be imposed upon any covered person found to have violated the Code of Conduct. The listing of the sanctions should not be construed to imply that covered persons are entitled to progressive discipline. The sanctions may be used in any order and/or combination that the University deems appropriate for the conduct in question.
  - a. Warning – A verbal or written notice that the respondent has not met the University's conduct expectations.
  - b. Probation – A written reprimand with stated conditions in effect for a designated



period of time, including the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions if the respondent does not comply with University policies or otherwise does not meet the University's conduct expectations during the probationary period.

- c. Restitution – Compensation for loss, damage or injury. This may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement.
  - d. Housing Suspension – Separation of the respondent from his/her University-controlled housing for a defined period of time. Conditions for returning to housing may be specified.
  - e. Housing Expulsion – Permanent separation of the respondent from University-controlled housing.
  - f. RUSVM Suspension – Separation of the respondent from the University for a defined period of time, after which the respondent may be eligible to return. Conditions for readmission may be specified.
  - g. RUSVM Expulsion – Permanent separation of the respondent from all University locations.
  - h. Suspension of Services – Ineligibility to receive specified services or all RUSVM services for a specified period of time, after which the respondent may regain eligibility. Conditions to regain access to services may be specified.
  - i. Ineligibility for Services – Permanent ineligibility to receive specified or all RUSVM services.
  - j. Limiting Order – Restriction on a respondent's permission to be in the same proximity as the complainant and/or others, with the parameters of the restriction to be defined by the University (e.g., for use with allegations of sexual or other misconduct).
2. More than one sanction listed above may be imposed for any single violation. In each case in which a Conduct Administrator or a conduct panel determines that a respondent has violated the Code of Conduct, sanction(s) shall be determined and imposed by the Conduct Administrator. In cases in which a multi-person panel is used, the recommendation of all members of the conduct panel shall be considered by the Conduct Administrator. Following the hearing, the Conduct Administrator shall advise the respondent in writing of the determination, the sanction(s) imposed, if any, and appeal procedures. In appropriate cases (e.g., allegations involving certain types of sexual misconduct), the Conduct Administrator will also simultaneously provide the complainant with written notice of the outcome and appeal procedures.
  3. Other than RUSVM suspension and RUSVM expulsion, disciplinary sanctions shall not be made part of the respondent's permanent academic record, but shall become part of the respondent's disciplinary record.

### **1.8.5 Interim Suspension**

In certain circumstances, the University may impose a RUSVM and/or housing interim suspension prior to the hearing before a conduct panel.

1. Interim suspension may be imposed:

- a. To ensure the safety and well-being of members of the RUSVM community or preservation of University property; or
  - b. If the University deems that the respondent poses a threat of disruption of or interference with the normal operation of the University.
2. During the interim suspension, the respondent may be denied access to RUSVM premises (including online and onsite classes) and/or all other University activities or privileges for which the respondent might otherwise be eligible, as the University may determine to be appropriate. In appropriate cases, the University may notify the complainant of a respondent's interim suspension status.

### **1.8.6 Appeals**

1. A decision of a violation of the Code of Conduct and the sanctions reached by the conduct panel or imposed by the Conduct Administrator may be appealed by the respondent or complainant to the person identified in the determination letter within seven days of the date of the appealing party's receipt of the determination letter. Such appeals shall be in writing. Receipt of the determination letter is presumed to be three days after mailing (for letters sent via US mail), the date of delivery (for tracked delivery), or the date of electronic transmission (for email). The results of the appeal to the person identified in the determination letter shall be final.
2. Except as required to explain the basis of new evidence, an appeal shall be limited to review of the verbatim record of the initial hearing and documents considered by the Conduct Administrator or conduct panel for one or more of the following purposes:
  - a. To determine whether the original hearing was administered fairly in light of the charges and evidence presented and in substantial conformity with prescribed procedures, giving the complainant a reasonable opportunity to prepare and present evidence that the Code of Conduct was violated, and giving the respondent a reasonable opportunity to prepare and present a rebuttal of those allegations;
  - b. To determine whether the decision reached regarding the respondent was based on reasonable evidence; that is, without substituting its judgment for that of conduct panel or the Conduct Administrator, the appellate decision-maker shall consider whether the facts in the case were reasonably sufficient to establish that a violation of the Code of Conduct occurred;
  - c. To determine whether the sanction(s) imposed were reasonably appropriate for the violation of the Code of Conduct the respondent was found to have committed. (Refer to Article IV (5) (i) for standard of proof.); or
  - d. To consider new evidence sufficient to alter the decision or sanction which was not brought out in the original hearing because such evidence was not known or available to the person appealing at the time of the original hearing.

The person ruling on the appeal shall notify in writing the complainant and respondent of the outcome of the appeal. If the person considering the appeal rules favorably on the appeal, the matter shall be remanded to the conduct panel (either the original panel or a new panel, as determined to be

appropriate by the person considering the appeal) and Conduct Administrator for action to be taken in response to the appeal findings.

If the ruling on the appeal is negative, then the decision of the original conduct panel is upheld and finalized.

## **1.8.7 Confidentiality and Prohibition on Retaliation**

### ***1.8.7.1 Confidentiality***

RUSVM wishes to foster an environment in which individuals feel free to raise and discuss concerns. RUSVM understands that complainants, respondents, witnesses, and others involved in the investigation process and conduct proceedings may be concerned about the confidentiality of information they are sharing.

In some cases, RUSVM may be obligated to take action when it becomes aware of information relating to a complaint. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible and consistent with RUSVM's obligations in investigating complaints and addressing conduct appropriately. While the confidentiality of information received, the privacy of individuals involved, and compliance with the wishes of the complainant or witnesses cannot be guaranteed, they will be respected to the extent possible and appropriate. In particular, when possible and consistent with applicable law, personally identifying information about victims of sexual misconduct will be kept confidential as it appears in the University's publicly available record-keeping.

### ***1.8.7.2 Retaliation***

RUSVM prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports an incident of alleged harassment, discrimination or other unlawful conduct, or any person who assists or participates in a proceeding, investigation or hearing relating to such allegations. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment. All complaints of retaliation should be reported in accordance with the student complaint procedure available in the Student Handbook. If following the student complaint procedure would result in the student being required to submit his/her complaint to the person whom he/she believes is retaliating against him or her, the student may submit the retaliation complaint to the location leader, who will determine an appropriate party to address the retaliation complaint.

Submission of a good-faith complaint or report of harassment, discrimination or other unlawful conduct will not adversely affect the complainant's future grades, learning, or academic environment. RUSVM will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone who retaliates against any person who reports an incident of alleged harassment, discrimination, or other unlawful conduct, or who retaliates against any person who testifies, assists or participates in a conduct proceeding, investigation or hearing related to such allegations.

## **1.9 CAMPUS SAFETY AND SECURITY**

A truly safe campus can only be achieved through the cooperation of students, faculty and staff. As members of this academic community, students must report crimes, suspicious activities or other emergencies on campus to the appropriate University official (e.g. Department of Safety & Security, Students Services or the chief location administrator). Students who witness or are victims of a crime affecting the RUSVM community should immediately report the incident to local law enforcement in the community, in which the campus is located, and to the Department of Safety & Security, Student Services office, or to the chief location administrator. RUSVM will investigate such crimes and, when appropriate, bring them to the attention of the Conduct Administrator and other University officials such as the Title IX Coordinator.

Given public concern about escalating incidents of school violence, the University will take appropriate administrative action to protect the community. Student behavior that causes campus safety or security concerns will typically be addressed pursuant to the Interim Suspension provisions of the Code of Conduct. Accordingly, immediate suspension and eventual expulsion may result for students who:

- Possess, sell or otherwise furnish a firearm
- Brandish a knife at another person
- Sell a controlled substance
- Commit or attempt to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery
- Possess an explosive
- Cause serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense
- Possess any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use
- Unlawfully possess any controlled substance
- Commit robbery or extortion
- Commit assault or battery

Nothing in this policy should be construed as limiting or preventing the University's discretion to take other action which, in the University's sole discretion is necessary or advisable to promote campus safety and security.

RUSVM takes seriously any threats made to cause harm to others or to oneself. Threats to harm others will be handled through the Code of Conduct, and may involve an interim suspension and/or the engagement of law enforcement officials until conduct proceedings are completed. In the case of threats to harm oneself, the University may call local law enforcement officials or other persons acquainted with the person making the threat for the purposes of checking on that person's welfare. The University may also work with the person to determine available resources and appropriate next steps.



## 1.10 SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND MISCONDUCT

Sexual harassment undermines the character and purpose of RUSVM and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and inappropriate sexualization of the working environment with words, materials, or behavior. It may involve women being harassed by men, men being harassed by women, or harassment between persons of the same sex. Sexual harassment is a violation of the Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

“Sexual harassment” means unwelcome conduct, based on sex, which is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with a person’s RUSVM employment, academic performance, or participation in RUSVM programs or activities and creates a working, learning, program or activity environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, hostile or offensive. Sexual harassment may include, for example, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and acts of sexual violence. In evaluating any complaint of sexual harassment, the perceived offensiveness of a particular expression, standing alone, is not sufficient by itself to constitute sexual harassment. The conduct in question must be objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive and interfere with a person’s right to participate equally in programs and activities of RUSVM. The exclusive purpose of this policy is to protect students from sex discrimination, consistent with applicable law. RUSVM may be obligated to investigate a complaint on sexual harassment with or without the complainant’s involvement. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible and consistent with RUSVM’s obligations in investigating complaints.

### 1.10.1 Sexual Misconduct and Response Prevention Policy

The following is a summary of the RUSVM Sexual Misconduct Response Policy. In the event of any discrepancy or conflict, the language of the full policy will supersede. The full Policy can be found at the following link: [http://www.rossu.edu/documents/Annual\\_Disclosure\\_RUSVM.pdf](http://www.rossu.edu/documents/Annual_Disclosure_RUSVM.pdf).

RUSVM is committed to fostering an environment where any type of sexual misconduct is promptly reported and sexual misconduct complaints are resolved in a fair and timely manner. The University expressly prohibits any instances of sexual misconduct including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and rape or acquaintance rape. Any acts that fall within the definitions of sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, acquaintance rape, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence or prohibited sexual contact are a violation of University policy, and potentially applicable local, state and federal law.

Creating a safe environment is the responsibility of all members of the RUSVM community. Anyone who believes he/she is a victim of sexual misconduct should report the incident as soon as possible to the Complaint Administrator or Title IX Coordinator and seek immediate medical and/or safety assistance.

#### 1.10.1.1 Prevention and Awareness

In an effort to reduce the risk of sexual misconduct such as sexual assault from occurring among its

students and colleagues, the University is committed to providing awareness and prevention programming. RUSVM will identify and provide programs to students, consistent with requirements of Title IX, VAWA, SaVE and other needs as determined on an ongoing basis. These programs will address all forms of sexual misconduct and include themes of awareness and primary prevention such as bystander intervention and the establishment community norms.

#### **1.10.1.2      *Disciplinary Action***

Acts of dating violence, domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and stalking are subject to disciplinary action by the University. The RUSVM official who receives notification of the misconduct will offer assistance to victims. A summary of these rights and options and other applicable, appropriate and available assistance, including referrals to counseling services, may be provided to victims through student services at the victim's option. No victim is required to take advantage of these services and resources, but RUSVM provides them in the hope of offering help and support.

Appropriate disciplinary sanctions for substantiated violations of this policy, up to and including expulsion, will be imposed in accordance with the Code of Conduct - Rules and Regulations found in Section 1.6.3 All parties in a student conduct proceeding will be informed of the University's appeal processes, and their rights to request an appeal. Should any change in outcome occur prior to finalization, all parties will be timely informed, and will be notified when the results of the resolution process become final.

Victims may file a formal complaint with the Complaint Administrator or Title IX Coordinator. If the victim wishes to access local community agencies and/or law enforcement for support, RUSVM will assist the victim in making these contacts.

#### **1.10.1.3      *Investigations of Sexual Misconduct***

When the victim chooses, or RUSVM believes it is necessary, a prompt, fair and impartial investigation will be initiated. If allegations are substantiated based on the totality of the circumstances, the respondent may be subject to the Code of Conduct process, which may result in the imposition of sanctions/discipline.

The procedure regarding complaints concerning student conduct and disciplinary proceedings which details the investigation and resolution processes for student misconduct can be found in Section 1.8 of the Student Handbook.

Any individual wishing to discuss an instance of sexual misconduct without triggering an immediate investigation should seek referral to mental health counseling services. Students may seek support through the RUSVM Counseling Center or through ASPIRE at 888.470.1531 or via [info@myASPIREonline.com](mailto:info@myASPIREonline.com).

It is RUSVM's policy to hold perpetrators of interpersonal violence, accountable for their actions through appropriate student conduct procedures, and by working with community agencies and law enforcement as appropriate. Mediation will not be used to resolve an allegation of sexual misconduct.

#### **1.10.1.4      *Procedures to Follow After a Sexual Misconduct Incident***

Victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, rape, and acquaintance rape on



campus or at any campus property outside of the main campus, or at any University-sponsored event or activity have the option and are encouraged to contact local law enforcement authorities.

Whenever possible victims should report a violation of this policy as soon as possible and preserve evidence as may be necessary to prove that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking occurred, or to obtain a protection order. Victims of sexual assault or rape are strongly encouraged to report the incident as described in this policy in order to deter these assaults and to ensure that victims receive the services they need. Steps should be taken to help deal with physical and emotional trauma associated with the violation. Recommended steps are available through the full policy found at the following link: [http://www.rossu.edu/documents/Annual\\_Disclosure\\_RUSVM.pdf](http://www.rossu.edu/documents/Annual_Disclosure_RUSVM.pdf).

The University will take interim steps to protect victims of sexual misconduct and maintain a positive learning and working environment by minimizing or eliminating contact with the respondent and providing reasonable academic and administrative accommodations in accordance with the Clery Act and Title IX. Victims of sexual misconduct may request a change in their academic arrangements by contacting the Director of the Student Experience, Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs, Title IX Coordinator, or local leadership.

#### **1.10.1.5      *Retaliation***

RUSVM prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports an incident of sexual misconduct or any person who assists or participates in a proceeding, investigation or hearing relating to such allegations. Any allegation of retaliation related to the investigation or resolution of a sexual misconduct allegation will be treated as an independent Title IX complaint requiring consideration of appropriate reparative interim action, as well as investigation and resolution as described in this policy.

Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

All complaints of retaliation should be reported in accordance with the University's complaint procedures. If University procedures would result in the student being required to submit his/her complaint to the person whom he/she believes is retaliating against him/her, the student may submit the retaliation complaint directly to the Title IX Coordinator, or to the campus leader, who should also inform the Title IX Coordinator.

Submission of a good-faith complaint or report of sexual misconduct will not adversely affect the complainant's future academic environment. RUSVM will discipline or take other appropriate action against anyone who retaliates against any person who reports an incident of alleged sexual misconduct or who retaliates against any person who assists or participates in a proceeding, investigation or hearing related to such allegations.

#### **1.10.1.6      *Confidentiality***

The University wishes to create an environment in which individuals feel free to discuss concerns and make complaints. The University understands that complainants, witnesses, and others involved in the investigation process may be concerned about the confidentiality of the information they are sharing. In some cases, however, the University may be obligated to take action when it becomes aware of information relating to a complaint.

Confidentiality in cases of sexual misconduct will be maintained to the extent permissible by law and



consistent with the University's obligations in investigating complaints. Once an individual discloses identifying information to the University through the processes described above and in the applicable complaint procedures, he/she will be considered to have filed a complaint with the University. While the confidentiality of information received, the privacy of individuals involved, and compliance with the wishes of the complainant or witnesses cannot be guaranteed, they will be respected to the extent possible and appropriate.

If a student wishes to speak with someone who can assure confidentiality, he/she is encouraged to access counseling services available through the RUSVM Counseling Center or through RUSVM's third party provider, ASPIRE, at 888.470.1531 or via <http://myaspireonline.com>.

#### **1.10.1.7      *Resources for Victims of Sexual Misconduct***

Local Resources are reviewed each year and can be found in the Annual Disclosure reports distributed to each campus community and posted on the Safety and Security page of the RUSVM web site. The reports contain lists of local resources available to victims of sexual misconduct. The resource lists are updated annually.

To access this information, go to: <http://www.rossu.edu/veterinary-school/Safety-Security.cfm>.

### **1.10.2      RUSVM Adherence to Title IX Federal Legislation**

In compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, RUSVM does not discriminate on the basis of sex in programs and activities. Please contact the Title IX Coordinator regarding the implementation of this law and its related regulations, including the investigation of any alleged non-compliance with or activity prohibited by Title IX, such as sexual harassment.

Mikhel Kushner  
Associate Title IX Coordinator [mkushner@devrygroup.com](mailto:mkushner@devrygroup.com)  
630.515.5440

Or

Mark Ewald  
Title IX Coordinator  
Senior Director, Ethics & Compliance Services [mewald@devrygroup.com](mailto:mewald@devrygroup.com)  
630.353.1437

## **1.11 ACADEMIC AND STUDENT POLICIES AND SANCTIONS**

### **1.11.1 Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct is a violation of the Honor Code and thereby a violation of the Code of Conduct. It is an offense for any covered person to make use of unethical or unfair means in any RUSVM assessment, to assist a covered person to make use of such unfair means, to do anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment, or to impersonate another covered person or allow another person to impersonate him/her in an assessment. Receipt or transmission of unauthorized aid on assignments or examinations, plagiarism, unauthorized and/or improper use of examination materials, or other forms of dishonesty in academic affairs are also considered as academic misconduct. Any covered person found to have cheated or attempted to cheat in an assessment may be deemed to have failed that assessment and will be subject to disciplinary action.

If a student suspects a fellow student of cheating during an exam, the student should discreetly alert an exam proctor at that time. A student that is reported as cheating on an examination and determined to have cheated, in accordance with Conduct violation proceedings, will receive a grade of zero for that examination, and is subject to other discipline, up to and including dismissal from RUSVM.

It is academically fraudulent and an offense against the policies of this Student Handbook for a covered person to invent or falsify data, evidence, references, experimental results or other material contributing to any covered person's assessed work or for a covered person knowingly to make use of such material. It is also an offense against RUSVM discipline for covered persons to collude in the submission of work that is intended for the assessment of individual academic performance or for a covered person to allow his/her work to be used by another covered person for fraudulent purposes.

A covered person who has previously submitted work for one course at this or another institution must not submit the same work or part of the work to attempt to achieve academic credit through another course.

Covered persons need to be careful when asking peers to proof-read their work. Proofreaders should only comment on the vocabulary, grammar and general clarity of written English. They should not advise on subject matter or argumentation.

#### **1.11.1.1 Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a violation of the Honor Code and thereby a violation of the Code of Conduct. Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another or your own previously assessed original work. It is academically fraudulent and an offense against RUSVM discipline. Plagiarism, at whatever stage of a candidate's course, whether discovered before or after graduation, will be investigated and dealt with appropriately by RUSVM. The innocent misuse or quotation of material without formal and proper acknowledgement can constitute plagiarism, even when there is no deliberate intent to cheat. Work may be plagiarized if it consists of close paraphrasing or unacknowledged summary of a source, as well as word-for-word transcription. Any failure to adequately acknowledge or properly reference other sources in submitted work could lead to lower marks and to disciplinary action being taken.

## **1.11.2 Substance and Alcohol Abuse Policy**

### **1.11.2.1 Overview**

RUSVM, as an institution of higher education, is committed to the continued and sustained health of its employees, its students, and to the patients entrusted to RUSVM employee and student care. As required by law, RUSVM must implement a policy to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of controlled substances on or within the RUSVM premises, its associated facilities, and during RUSVM-affiliated activities.

In addition to the personal negative effects on academic performance, judgment, cognizance, physical health, and mental and emotional stability, individuals engaged in abuse pose a significant risk to the health and safety of fellow students, faculty, and patients. Substance abuse and its influences compromise RUSVM's commitment to excellence and education, thereby posing a threat to the mission of RUSVM.

In addition, addiction to drugs or alcohol may prevent graduates from obtaining licensure and/or practices in relevant professions.

### **1.11.2.2 Applicable Law**

RUSVM is required to adopt, implement, and monitor a program to prevent the unlawful possession, distribution, or use of controlled substances and alcohol by University employees and students on University grounds or as part of its associative entities.

### **1.11.2.3 Prohibited Activities**

RUSVM strictly prohibits:

- The unlawful manufacturing, distribution, dispensing, use, or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, and controlled substances or the misuse of legal medications/drugs on the RUSVM campus or the grounds of its affiliates (i.e. clinical teaching facilities);
- Being under the influence of or misusing any substance or alcohol, while participating in activities for, or in the name of, RUSVM, in a manner which may result in impairment or endanger the physical, mental and/or emotional wellbeing of any person; and
- Any violation of the Substance and Alcohol Abuse Policy is considered a violation of school conduct policies and is subject to the penalties of the school and of presiding local, state, and federal jurisdictions.

### **1.11.2.4 Penalties/Sanctions**

#### **1.11.2.4.1 RUSVM Sanctions**

The RUSVM Code of Conduct and its procedures govern all students. Violation of policies specific to alcohol and other drugs are considered violations of the Code of Conduct. Violations include the unlawful possession, use, manufacture, sale, or distribution of alcohol and other drugs.

The sale, possession, distribution, or manufacture of illicit drugs may result in disciplinary proceedings. Regardless of geographic boundaries, if a student has been convicted of a drug or alcohol related offense in a court of law, the student is subject to RUSVM discipline.

Applicable sanctions include, but are not limited to, probation, probation and referral for treatment and rehabilitation, suspension, or expulsion. RUSVM may refer any case to the proper local, state, and/or federal authorities for appropriate legal action. Individuals disciplined under the RUSVM Policy on Substance and Alcohol Abuse have the right to an appeal in accordance with applicable RUSVM grievance procedures.

#### *1.11.2.4.2 External Sanctions*

The sanctions imposed under the Substance and Alcohol Abuse Policy neither diminish nor replace the penalties available under generally applicable civil or criminal laws. Violations of RUSVM standards may also violate federal, state, and local laws of the United States, England, and the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

Violators will be subject to all appropriate penalties within the jurisdiction of the offense. Within the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis jurisdiction, drug trafficking, which includes producing, supplying, and use, is punishable by fines, deportation, and/or imprisonment. Copies of the relevant drug laws are available in the RUSVM library.

#### *1.11.2.4.3 Prevention & Assistance*

RUSVM will facilitate substance abuse prevention through general promotion of a substance-free educational environment, by informing students of current and subsequent changes to policies on alcohol and other drugs, and through advocating an atmosphere where individuals with a problem are encouraged to seek help.

There are resources on campus and in the community available for assistance. RUSVM counseling and health services are confidential and available to students without charge. Students seeking assistance for a substance abuse problem will not be subject to sanctions by RUSVM as a result of seeking such assistance.

For information or assistance with substance and/or alcohol abuse matters, call the RUSVM Counseling Center (869) 465-4161 ext. 1500, or email [CounselingCenter@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:CounselingCenter@rossvet.edu.kn).

### **1.11.3 Smoking Policy**

It is the policy of RUSVM to provide a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty, and staff. This includes an environment free of second-hand smoke. Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not permitted on campus except in designated areas. Smokeless tobacco products are not to be used in any building used for teaching or in the Student Union. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action and sanctions up to and including dismissal.

Additionally, unless otherwise posted, use of tobacco products and e-cigarettes on RUSVM premises or at RUSVM events is prohibited.

#### **1.11.4 Commitment to Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity**

It is RUSVM's policy to provide an environment free of unlawful harassment or discrimination based upon race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, citizenship status, or any other category protected by applicable law. RUSVM complies with all applicable laws regarding discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and equal opportunity.

#### **1.11.5 Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

As part of its dedication to making educational opportunities available to a diverse range of students, RUSVM is committed to ensuring that qualified students with disabilities are afforded reasonable accommodations (For DVM students, please refer to Section 2.2, for postgraduate students, please refer to Section 3.1).

#### **1.11.6 Mental Health**

The mental and emotional stability of students is a primary concern of RUSVM. If RUSVM has reason to believe that a student is suffering from serious mental or emotional distress, or if a student has attempted or threatened to harm himself/herself or others, the student will be encouraged to initially take an emergency leave of absence (ELOA) on medical grounds in order to receive appropriate treatment. In the event that the student is unable to return at the end of the ELOA, they will automatically be placed on Academic Leave of Absence (ALOA) for the remainder of the semester, with the possibility of extension according to the policies governing ALOA. All policies governing ALOA are detailed in Section 2.11.3.2 of this Student Handbook.

The student will be allowed to return to campus after RUSVM has received medical/psychological documentation that the student has satisfactorily participated in all recommended treatments and assessments, and that the student no longer poses a risk of harm to self or others. The documentation must clearly state that the student is capable of engaging fully in the academic program, and that the mental health practitioner supports, without reservation, the student's return to campus.

The RUSVM Counseling Center is available to provide support and assistance to RUSVM students in maximizing their success while at RUSVM. Counseling is confidential and services include individual and group counseling for personal as well as academic concerns. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Certain psychotropic medications may not be available in St. Kitts or available by shipment to the island. Furthermore, physicians may be reluctant to provide more than a few months' supply of these medications. The expectation is that the student will have a workable plan by which they can maintain an appropriate supply of their medications prior to beginning the DVM program or an on-campus postgraduate degree program. An insufficient supply of medications will not be considered an excuse for inappropriate behavior or inadequate performance. All requests for accommodations in connection with any such conditions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

A phone and live chat service is also available through the Aspire Student Assistance Program, which is to complement the work of the RUSVM on-campus Counseling Center. Aspire provides students access to confidential emotional support in the privacy of their home for:

- Stress management
- Anxiety and depression
- Family conflicts
- Academic challenges

Aspire services are designed to help students succeed inside the classroom and out. Aspire utilizes licensed clinicians based in the US and includes:

- 24/7/365 toll-free phone – 1.800.932.0034
- Virtual access: email ([info@myASPIREonline.com](mailto:info@myASPIREonline.com)), live chat, Skype™
- Always live-answer in 175 different languages
- myASPIREonline: 24/7 ASPIRE student assistance website
- Multilingual and multicultural providers

Please note: ASPIRE is not managed by the RUSVM Counseling Center but operates as a stand-alone entity based in the US. On-campus students are invited to continue to utilize the services of the RUSVM Counseling Center, as usual.

## **1.12 PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO IMAGING POLICY**

### **1.12.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any type of photography, such as still pictures, video and film recorded or broadcast by any means, including storage by electronic media, which occurs in, or around the facilities of RUSVM is approved by the Dean. Such photography must not interfere with the educational, scholarly or administrative functions of the institution, or impair any individual's right to privacy.

### **1.12.2 Scope**

This procedure applies to all visitors, faculty, staff and students. Permission to shoot is required in all circumstances. This includes, but is not limited to, residence halls, dining areas, classrooms, laboratories, administration buildings, and outdoor teaching areas including animal holding, treatment, and surgery or pasture facilities. Photography of animals or procedures involving animals is strictly prohibited, unless it is allowed by a particular course syllabus for educational purposes. Any pictures are not for publication or distribution unless approved by the Dean. Students found to be in violation of this policy are subject to institutional discipline up to and including expulsion.

### **1.12.3 Procedure**

Photography is generally permitted in outdoor, public areas of campus, except those involving any of the above prohibited subjects. Prior permission from the Dean is required when:

- i. the photography is for commercial purposes;
- ii. the photography will record a RUSVM trade name, trade mark, or logo;
- iii. the photography is intended for a political purpose; or
- iv. the photography will require set up of any equipment which could impede normal activities on campus.

Photography shall be considered to be for commercial purposes if it is intended to be sold or otherwise exchanged for value, or is for any use that could imply endorsement of a product or service. Photography will be considered to be for a political purpose if it is used or intended to support or oppose either a candidate for any public office, or any particular point of view on an issue of public concern or debate.

Photography for films or videos may require submission of storyboards or scripts prior to approval. All photography permissions are for designated times and dates. RUSVM does not guarantee that any specific area or activity on campus will be available at the requested time or date. All photography permission by RUSVM must specify designated times and dates in writing and be signed by the Dean. RUSVM may withhold its permission or require conditions for its permission at its discretion.

Permission of RUSVM does not include or imply any permission to photograph any individual, regardless of whether such person is a staff member, student, or visitor to the RUSVM facilities. Photographers are reminded that they need to obtain the permission of each individual photographed and that commercial use of an individual's image or likeness typically requires the written consent of that individual.

In the event of an incident or emergency requiring police, fire, or other emergency response personnel, access to areas previously open to photographers may be barred or limited to allow emergency personnel to ensure safety and security. Depending on the nature of the photography, the amount of equipment used and the location of the photography, proof of general liability insurance may be required. Specific contractual arrangements must be negotiated in advance.

To see all other policies, please go to the following link:

<https://portal.rossvet.edu.kn/policies/studentpolicies.cfm>.



## 1.13 UNDERSTANDING FERPA

### 1.13.1 The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine respects the rights and privacy of its students and acknowledges the responsibility to maintain confidentiality of personally identifiable information. Students have the right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by RUSVM to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

FERPA is a federal law that affords students the following rights with respect to their education records, and includes the following main thematic areas:

- Access to Education Records
- Amendment of Education Records
- Disclosure of Education Records
- Annual Notification of Rights
- Law Enforcement Units and Law Enforcement Unit Records
- Complaints of Alleged Failures to Comply with FERPA
- Complaint Regarding Access
- Complaint Regarding Amendment
- Complaint Regarding Disclosure

For further information on the thematic areas of FERPA, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/ferpa/index.html>. Additionally, the name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
US Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

For further information, students may also contact the Family Policy Compliance Office directly at 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may call 1-800-437-0833.

#### 1.13.1.1 *Student Records: Privacy Rights and FERPA Notification*

RUSVM follows the guidelines of the US Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and maintains student rights as outlined below:

##### 1.13.1.1.1 *Right to Review*

Students have the right to inspect and review educational records within 45 days of the date that RUSVM receives a request for access. Students should submit a written request to the Office of the Registrar that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Office of the Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be

inspected.

#### *1.13.1.1.2 Corrections*

Students have the right to request the amendment of education records that they believe are inaccurate or misleading. Students should write to the Office of the Registrar, clearly identify the part of the record they want corrected and specify why it is inaccurate.

#### *1.13.1.1.3 Hearings*

If RUSVM decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, RUSVM will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided when the student is notified of the right to a hearing.

#### *1.13.1.1.4 Consent*

Students have a right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education record, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

#### *1.13.1.1.5 Disclosures without Consent*

Disclosure can be made without consent to RUSVM officials with legitimate educational interests who need to review a record in order to fulfill their professional responsibilities. A RUSVM official is a person employed by RUSVM in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom RUSVM has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee) or assisting a RUSVM official. Upon request, RUSVM may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

RUSVM may disclose directory information upon request. Directory information includes:

- Name, address, and telephone listing
- Dates of attendance, degrees and awards
- Field of study
- Most recent school attended
- Photographs
- Date and place of birth
- Email address

## **1.14 COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE UNIVERSITY**

In most cases, students should first attempt to resolve their complaints orally or in writing with the individual(s) most directly connected to the student's complaint. For example, a student who is dissatisfied with the availability of a professor during office hours is encouraged to discuss the scheduling issue directly with the professor before discussing the issue with the professor's department head. RUSVM encourages students to engage in respectful and thoughtful communications to resolve their complaints with RUSVM faculty, administration or staff as a means of preparing students to resolve conflicts as a medical professional. RUSVM's encouragement of informal complaint resolution should not be construed as an indication that RUSVM does not take informal complaints seriously.

A student pursuing informal resolution of his/her complaint is not required to submit a written complaint to initiate the process. Students are encouraged to discuss a complaint or concern with the RUSVM colleague closest to the student's issue or to consult with the Complaint Administrator for advice on how best to resolve a complaint informally. If the RUSVM colleague is able to satisfactorily address the student's complaint or concern, no further action will be taken beyond those needed to achieve resolution in most cases.

Complaints addressed informally may not be investigated to the same degree as formal complaints, depending on the nature of the complaint and its resolution. The student may, at any time, elect to withdraw their complaint. Students are advised, however, that certain complaints require investigation once they are brought to the attention of the Complaint Administrator. Such complaints include allegations relating to violations of Title IX regulations, or allegations that, if true, suggest a threat to the safety of the RUSVM community or campus.

If a student is not comfortable discussing the matter with the individual(s) most directly involved, or has been unable to reach satisfactory resolution informally with the individual(s) most directly involved, the student may take his or her complaint to the Complaint Administrator. The Complaint Administrator will work with the student to pursue an appropriate resolution to the complaint raised.

## **2 DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**

### **2.1 STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE AVMA (SCAVMA)**

The student body elects class representatives, committee members, and officers for the Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association (SCAVMA). SCAVMA is active in coordinating athletic events, sponsoring and arranging the social activities on campus, and bringing student issues to the attention of the Administration. Students who are officers in SCAVMA are considered leaders and role models for the student body. Candidates for SCAVMA offices must be in good academic standing with a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.5 or higher prior to election. The Director of the Student Experience (or, in his/her absence, the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs), advises SCAVMA along with faculty advisor(s) from the RUSVM Faculty chosen by SCAVMA. SCAVMA entertains and addresses most matters related to student activities. Academic and non-academic issues that exceed its authority should be referred to the appropriate complaint process. Students are required to pay a SCAVMA fee, which is collected with other student fees and used for SCAVMA activities. SCAVMA has responsibility for expenditure of student activity fees collected at registration with two important caveats. First, the Director of Finance has approval and auditing authority over SCAVMA funds. Second, SCAVMA funds shall not be used to purchase alcohol.

As mandated by Standard 11 of the AVMA's Council on Education accreditation standards, any student may bring forth any suggestions, comments, and complaints about RUSVM at any time. They may do this through their elected SCAVMA representatives or in an anonymous fashion. Anonymous suggestions can be made by leaving a sealed envelope in the Complaint Administrator's mailbox or by inserting a note in the locked box located outside of the western entrance to the library. For formal complaints, see Section 1.14 Complaints against the University.

RUSVM's mission and function are purely academic. It is not organized, staffed or equipped to promote, run or oversee student events that fall outside these boundaries. RUSVM fulfills an administrative function with respect to SCAVMA activities by collecting fees from students, which are remitted to SCAVMA in order to fund certain legitimate activities. RUSVM remits these fees to SCAVMA on the express condition that they are to be used only for activities relating to student government or academic pursuits.

Students are advised that RUSVM assumes no responsibility whatsoever in connection with SCAVMA or other events sponsored by students, student organizations, or outside organizations. It does not provide oversight, security, or transportation for said events. In particular, RUSVM disclaims all responsibility for any alcohol served or consumed at any such events, or the consequences of these actions. All matters relating to the event are the responsibility of the individuals attending.

## **2.2 ACCOMMODATIONS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

As part of its dedication to making educational opportunities available to a diverse range of students, RUSVM is committed to ensuring that qualified students with disabilities are afforded reasonable accommodations (see Section 1.11.5).

The process outlined below pertains to requests for accommodations relating to the preclinical curriculum while a student is studying in St. Kitts. For accommodations requests pertaining to the clinical year, please see Section 2.12.1.4. For accommodations requests pertaining to a postgraduate degree program, please see Section 3.1.

Students are advised that accommodations granted by RUSVM during the pre-clinical phase of the curriculum may not be available during the clinical training phase of the curriculum. For more information about accommodations during the clinical year, please refer to Section 2.12.1.4.

Students are advised that accommodations may not be available at facilities in St. Kitts outside of the RUSVM campus, including but not limited to housing and other public establishments such as restaurants.

### **2.2.1 When to Submit a Request for Accommodations**

For recently-admitted DVM students, requests for accommodation should be made as soon as reasonably possible after admission and preferably within thirty (30) days of acceptance to RUSVM. For existing DVM students, the student should make a request as soon as reasonably possible and, to the extent possible, at least thirty (30) days prior to the start of the semester in which an accommodation is requested. Requests submitted during the course of a pre-clinical semester must be submitted as soon as practicable under the circumstances, and RUSVM will make all reasonable efforts to review such requests in a timely manner but cannot ensure the disposition of any such requests prior to any specific examination or phase of the curriculum.

Students are advised that requests for accommodation are not automatically granted and cannot always be immediately implemented. It is the responsibility of the student seeking an accommodation to submit a timely request with such supporting documentation (procured solely by the student) as may be required. While RUSVM attempts to respond to requests quickly and efficiently, the processing of requests is an interactive one that is not within RUSVM's sole control. To a large extent, the process relies upon the request and any necessary response, including provision of relevant documents, from the student and/or the student's physician. Certain requests for accommodation may require that RUSVM procure assistive technology or other resources, which may not be readily available in St. Kitts. Accordingly, students are encouraged to give RUSVM as much advanced notice as possible of the student's request for an accommodation. Requests that are not submitted in a timely manner or requests not accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation may impede RUSVM's ability to review requests for accommodation.

### **2.2.2 How to Submit a Request**

Requests for accommodation should be made to the campus Accommodations Coordinator. The Accommodations Coordinator is available to assist students with this process and may be contacted as follows:

RUSVM Accommodations Coordinator: [rusvmaccommodationscoordinator@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:rusvmaccommodationscoordinator@rossvet.edu.kn).

RUSVM keeps all accommodation requests confidential except to the extent necessary to consider the request and implement any approved accommodations.

### **2.2.3 How Requests are Processed**

The Accommodations Coordinator is responsible for receiving and reviewing a request and making a preliminary determination as to whether the request is supported by adequate and appropriate documentation. The Accommodations Coordinator will engage in an interactive process with students requesting accommodations, which process may include, but is not limited to, an interview, consultation with appropriate professionals, and/or request for additional supporting documentation. After such interaction with the student and careful review, RUSVM will make a decision as to whether and to what extent requested accommodations are reasonable and the decision will be communicated to the student by the Accommodations Coordinator.

Where additional resources, such as psychological testing, are required to evaluate a requested accommodation and such resources are not readily available in St. Kitts, RUSVM reserves the right to grant an accommodation to a student on an interim basis to grant the student sufficient time to obtain supporting documentation for his/her request. The decision to grant an interim accommodation is within RUSVM's sole discretion. Students are advised that, if an interim accommodation is granted, such interim accommodation ordinarily will not extend beyond the current semester. Students granted an interim accommodation will be expected to make arrangements for, and procure, whatever additional testing or supporting documentation is required to evaluate the request at their earliest opportunity and, in any event, no later than the start of the following semester.

Any accommodation granted will be reasonable and appropriate to the circumstances, allowing equal opportunity for qualified students with disabilities, and will not infringe on the essential requirements of, or fundamentally alter, the medical education program of RUSVM.

### **2.2.4 Appealing the Denial of a Requested Accommodation**

Students who believe they have been denied a reasonable accommodation, or who otherwise believe they have been unlawfully discriminated against based on a disability, may file a formal complaint pursuant to the policy set forth in Section 1.14, Complaints Against the University.

## **2.3 PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

RUSVM confers a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree only after a student has mastered the body of knowledge and skills that comprises the veterinary curriculum to the satisfaction of the faculty. The faculty expects each veterinary student to demonstrate proficiency in the use and understanding of principles and facts related to the pre-clinical curriculum and in the application of these principles to the practice of clinical medicine.

There are certain professional qualities and technical skills that students must possess and/or refine to accomplish these things. These essential qualities include: ethical, attitudinal, and behavioral attributes, stamina, intellectual (cognitive, integrative, and quantitative abilities) capacity, communication skills, and the visual, auditory, tactile acuity and motor skills necessary to function as a health care professional. The following guidelines are meant to familiarize students with the expectations of the faculty, as well as some of the inherent demands of RUSVM's veterinary curriculum. Judgments about whether a student has failed to meet any of these standards will be made in the context of the procedures outlined in this Student Handbook.

Students must be able to meet these standards with or without a reasonable accommodation. Students wishing to request accommodations due to disability should contact the campus Accommodation Coordinator.

## **2.4 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

### **2.4.1 Ethical, Attitudinal, and Behavioral Requirements**

Desirable characteristics of veterinary students are based not only on satisfactory academic achievement, but also on non-academic factors that serve to ensure that they have the behavioral and social attributes necessary to contribute positively to the veterinary profession. RUSVM students are required to have those character traits, attitudes, and values that will result in beneficent and ethical veterinary care. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Because the medical profession is governed by ethical principles and by laws, a veterinary student must have the capacity to understand, learn, and abide by relevant and applicable values and laws. Examples of breaches of veterinary medical ethics include, but are not limited to:
  - cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty;
  - submitting fraudulent medical records or certificates;
  - willfully withholding medical treatments ordered by a clinician;
  - betraying a client confidence; or



- animal cruelty, whether through acts of commission or omission.
- A veterinary student must be able to relate to instructors, classmates, staff, clients and their animals with honesty, compassion, empathy, integrity and dedication.
- A veterinary student must not allow considerations of religion, disability, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, politics or social standing to preclude productive and constructive relationships with instructors, staff, classmates, or clients.
- A veterinary student must not allow considerations of breed or species to influence relationships with his/her patients or teaching animals. For example, a student must never intentionally withhold medical care from a feline patient out of a dislike or distrust of cats.
- A veterinary student must be able to understand and use the authority, special privileges, and trust inherent in the veterinary student-client relationship for the benefit of both the client and the patient, and avoid behaviors that constitute misuse of this power.
- A veterinary student must never compromise care of an animal that has been left in his or her care or is his or her responsibility, regardless of whether this care conflicts with personal schedules or activities.
- A veterinary student must never engage in educational activities while under the influence of alcohol or illegal or illicit drugs or substances. In addition, a student should not engage in patient care duties while impaired in any manner by any substance (e.g., a student shall not engage in patient care duties while taking a prescribed drug known to have adverse side effects until the student knows that he or she is not susceptible to such side effects).
- A veterinary student must never perform any action that might be construed as the practice of veterinary medicine, except as permitted under the laws of a the applicable jurisdiction in which the student may function in the role of providing animal health care under the direction of a licensed veterinarian.
- A veterinary student must be able to fully utilize his/her intellectual ability, to exercise good judgment, to complete patient care responsibilities promptly and properly and to relate to patients, patients' owners, faculty, administrators, staff and colleagues with courtesy, compassion, maturity and respect for their dignity.
- A veterinary student must demonstrate maturity, including the ability to adapt to island culture, the ability to exercise good judgment and tolerance and acceptance of social, cultural and/or political differences.
- A veterinary student must be able to work collaboratively and flexibly as a professional team member.
- A veterinary student must behave in a professional manner in spite of stressful work demands, changing environments and clinical uncertainties.
- A veterinary student must have the capacity to modify behavior in response to constructive criticism.
- A veterinary student must be open to examining personal attitudes, perceptions and stereotypes that may negatively impact patient care or interpersonal relationships.
- A veterinary student must possess an intrinsic desire for excellence and be motivated to become an effective veterinarian.

### **2.4.2 Professional Appearance Policy**

RUSVM values, and is committed to its role in preparing our students for the world of work within the profession of Veterinary Medicine. As part of this commitment, we have a responsibility to highlight



critical areas to help prepare graduates, who can represent themselves, the profession and RUSVM, at local, regional, national and international levels.

We understand that to attain professional recognition, and to be able to compete successfully in the field of Veterinary Medicine, public perception plays a crucial role in determining competence, confidence, caring and professional pride.

RUSVM community members (students, faculty, staff, and VIPs) should be tidy and clean, maintain a personal appearance suitable to represent the profession to the public, and demonstrate polite concern for the needs of others. We must maintain a healthy and positive learning environment, and safeguard the reputation of our institution and ourselves within RUSVM, and within the St. Kitts community.

All RUSVM community members are expected to comply with the following Professional Appearance Policy. The following guidelines apply during normal weekday business hours (8:00AM - 5:00PM) and in any clinical situation or formal academic setting that takes place during weekends:

**All RUSVM Community Members:**

- Particular attention should be paid to personal hygiene and cleanliness;
- All clothing should be in good repair, should fit properly, and should not be excessively wrinkled;
- Clothing should not be provocative;
- Clothing must fit so that inappropriate exposure does not occur during normal activities;
- Unless specified by an instructor, laboratory attire (i.e. scrubs, coveralls, lab coat, rubber boots) are not acceptable in a non-laboratory setting; and
- School-sponsored meetings and lectures on campus, whether held during the day, at night, or on weekends, are considered official functions of RUSVM. Classroom attire is appropriate during such meetings.

**The following are NOT considered appropriate attire for RUSVM:**

- Clothing or accessories that promote drug use, alcohol, tobacco, violence, criminal activity, intimidation, or intolerance of others (based on religion, ethnicity, gender, etc.);
- Clothing or accessories with sexually suggestive language, messages, or images;
- Shorts that do not provide appropriate coverage or skirts and dresses shorter than the tips of one's fingertips when arms are extended by one's side;
- Spandex, volleyball, and compression shorts;
- Transparent clothing or any clothing (including exercise/workout attire) that reveals excessive cleavage, the back, chest, stomach/midriff, or undergarments;
- Apparel that is excessively dirty, torn, odoriferous or in other-than-normal disrepair; and
- Bare feet, bedroom slippers, swimsuits, and pajamas.

**Policy Exceptions:**

- Exceptions to this policy pertaining to academic courses may be detailed in individual course syllabi.
- Athletic attire may be worn in the gym and locker rooms.
- The Professional Appearance Policy does not apply to campus residence halls.
- Please see the Protective Clothing Policy in the RUSVM SGA Handbook for clothing guidelines specific to the Ross University Veterinary Clinic (RUVCL), large animal areas, various campus laboratories, and isolation areas.

Non-compliance results in unnecessary distraction to the educational mission and journey for all within the RUSVM community. All RUSVM students have an obligation to adhere to the guidelines governing attire, and may be asked to change their clothing or to cover up if their dress is considered inappropriate, or makes colleague-students, faculty or staff uncomfortable. The student body and faculty/staff will be responsible for reporting violations to the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs.

Students in violation of the above standards of the RUSVM Professional Appearance Policy will be issued a warning by the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs and may be prohibited from attending classes until the student is in compliance with these requirements. If the student continues to violate the Professional Appearance Policy after advisement from the Associate Dean, disciplinary action may be required.

## **2.5 EVALUATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

A veterinary student's professional conduct may be assessed and initially addressed by the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs at any time during a student's tenure at RUSVM or at an affiliate school. On a more routine basis, the conduct of each student in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program will be evaluated during the 10th week of each semester to determine whether each student has satisfactorily met the RUSVM and AVMA Professional Standards.

The evaluations will be conducted by the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs and corresponding course directors. Around the 10th week of the semester, the Associate Dean will schedule meetings with all first semester course directors, all second semester course directors, and so on through the sixth semester of the curriculum. In these meetings, the professional conduct of students in the respective semesters will be carefully considered. Given the potential overlap between conduct and depth of learning, students' academic performance may be discussed as well. Over the course of the meetings, faculty will make recommendations to the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs about possible actions to be taken, including review by the Academic Review Committee (ARC) or the Conduct Board. Appeals process is described in Section 2.10.

Possible actions may include, but are not limited to the following: (a) a written acknowledgement of exemplary professional conduct, (b) an oral reprimand, (c) a written warning, which may appear in the academic file of the student and which may include requirements for the student to complete in order

to continue his/her education with RUSVM (e.g., psychological evaluation, counseling, rehabilitation), or (d) dismissal from RUSVM, which shall be reflected in the student's permanent academic file. Appeals process is described in Section 2.10.

Students who have not conducted themselves in an exemplary fashion or those who have not met the RUSVM and AVMA Professional Standards will be scheduled to meet with the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs as soon as possible. In the meeting, the praise or concerns of the faculty will be delivered and an appropriate action taken.

## **2.6 TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

### **2.6.1 Stamina**

The study and ongoing practice of veterinary medicine often involves taxing workloads and stressful situations. A veterinary student must have the physical and emotional stamina to maintain a high level of function in the face of challenging working conditions.

A veterinary student must be able to lift objects or animals weighing up to 25 kg, to a height of one meter and carry that object or animal for a distance of two meters. Application: placing a dog on an examination table, lifting and carrying a bag containing drugs and equipment from an ambulatory service vehicle, restraining small and large animal patients.

A veterinary student must have sufficient endurance to maintain a standing or kneeling posture for 10 minutes. Application: physical examination of and surgical procedures on patients.

A veterinary student must have adequate coordinated movement and strength to restrain large animals and to be able to move rapidly out of the way of danger. Application: treatment of large animals.

### **2.6.2 Intellectual Capacity**

A veterinary student must possess a range of intellectual skills that allows him/her to master the broad and complex body of knowledge that comprises a medical education at a level deemed to be appropriate by the faculty. These skills include the ability:

- to comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships of structure;
- to perform scientific measurements and calculations; and
- to develop reasoning, problem solving and decision-making skills appropriate to the practice of veterinary medicine.

A veterinary student's reasoning abilities must be sufficiently sophisticated to analyze and synthesize information from a wide variety of sources. He/she must be able to learn effectively through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to:

- classroom instruction;
- small group discussion and interactive assignments, including participation in medical

rounds, and goal-directed activities;

- individual study of materials;
- preparation and presentation of written and oral reports;
- ability to learn independently from reading/printed material; and
- use of computer technology.

### **2.6.3 Communication Skills**

Throughout the curriculum, a veterinary student will be expected to communicate effectively and in a timely fashion, utilizing verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills with instructors, staff, and peers.

During the clinical year, a veterinary student must also learn to communicate with clients. Communication with a client often begins with the gathering and writing of a useful medical history. Students must be able to formulate and ask clients relevant questions, perceptively interpret their answers, and record these responses accurately in a clear and concise medical record. In addition, they must be able to comprehend and interpret written materials, such as laboratory reports, pharmacological prescriptions, medical notices and research articles.

A veterinary student must also possess sufficient observational skills to assess signs exhibited by patients and the emotional state of owners.

A veterinary student must also possess the ability to communicate fluently and effectively in written and spoken English.

### **2.6.4 Visual, Auditory, Tactile, and Motor Competency**

Veterinary students must have sufficient motor skills to carry out, in an autonomous manner, all necessary procedures involved in the learning of pre-clinical and clinical sciences, as well as those required in the hospital and clinical environment. Specifically:

- A veterinary student must possess sufficient visual, auditory, tactile, and motor abilities to allow him/her to gather data or information from written material, including medical illustrations and graphic materials, from oral presentations, from demonstrations and experiments, from observations of clinical procedures performed by others, from computerized representations of physiologic phenomena, and from observations made during a basic physical examination and/or more specialized (e.g. orthopedic and neurological) examinations of a patient. In terms of a visual standard, a student must be able to discern changes in position at distances ranging from 30-45 centimeters to 15-20 meters.
- A veterinary student must also be capable of eliciting and perceiving normal findings or signs of disease as manifested through the physical examination. Examples of findings that must be perceived and interpreted include, but are not limited to: the sounds emitted by the heart, intestines, and lungs; assessing the pliability and turgor of the skin; recognizing subtle changes in the hair coat; feeling the difference between a soft tissue neoplastic growth, a cyst, and a lymph node; evaluating the integrity and range of motion of musculoskeletal structures (bones, muscles, joints) of all the domestic animal species; and evaluating the consistency and/or distention of various intra-abdominal structures (for example, liver, spleen,

intestines, kidneys, and reproductive organs), which must be accomplished through a combination of visualization and external and/or internal palpation.

- A veterinary student must be able to distinguish subtle shades of black, white and gray as these pertain to the five radiographic densities in films of the chest, abdomen, and extremities. In order to interpret test results, such as bacterial hemolysis on an agar plate or an ECG tracing, a student must also be able to resolve black and white patterns of less than 0.5 mm of separation.
- In order to detect subtle tissue swelling or the presence of a reaction to skin testing for allergies, a veterinary student must have sufficient depth perception to allow detection of a 0.5 cm elevation that is no more than 1 cm in diameter on a slightly curved and irregular surface.
- A veterinary student must possess sufficient color discrimination to detect changes in color of an animal's mucous membranes or coat.
- A veterinary student must have sufficient hearing to be able to perceive the human voice without lip reading and to perceive sounds while percussing or auscultating with a stethoscope.
- The veterinary student must be able to perceive the origin of sounds, such as the movement of large animals in a stall or the monitoring of multiple patients in an intensive care unit.
- A veterinary student must be able to determine the position of one hand extended from the body within +/- 100 when the arm is extended in any direction, the eyes are closed, and the individual is standing. Application: endotracheal intubation, intravenous injection, rectal palpation.
- A veterinary student must be able to differentiate between four round semisolid objects with diameters of 0.5, 1.0, 1.5 and 2.0 cm and to judge the shape and consistency of objects when the arm is extended and the eyes are closed. Application: assisting in surgery, palpating lymph nodes or follicles, palpating the trachea to determine proper endotracheal tube size.
- A veterinary student must be able to make legible written notes, within the margins and spaces provided on medical forms, while communicating with other individuals by speech, either in person or by telephone.
- A veterinary student must be able to grasp, manipulate, and employ surgical instruments, like scalpels, clamps, and retractors, or other specialized instruments, such as ophthalmoscopes.
- A veterinary student must be able to hold, manipulate or tie lightweight materials such as surgical sponges, small gauge catheters, and fine suture material.
- A veterinary student must be able to manipulate tissues and employ devices in order to perform entry-level procedures; examples are venipuncture, vascular and urinary catheter placement, rectal palpation, and expressing anal sacs.
- In terms of allergies or fears, a veterinary student must be able to have sustained contact with multiple species of animals and their environments, including chemicals such as formalin that may be present in such environments. During such contact, the student must be able to carry out routine medical care and required laboratory exercises.

Students requiring an accommodation to perform any of these essential requirements must contact the RUSVM Accommodations Coordinator. During the clinical year, RUSVM students need to contact the appropriate Affiliate School representative to request accommodations. Requests for accommodations will be considered on a case by case basis. Please refer to Section 2.2 of this Student Handbook for additional information.



## **2.7 ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

### **2.7.1 The Curriculum**

The DVM degree is awarded upon successful completion of the pre-clinical and the clinical curriculum.

The pre-clinical curriculum is designed to be taken over seven (7) semesters, and consists of 130 semester credit hours of specific courses in the basic sciences as stated in the Academic Catalog, or as revised from time to time.

The clinical curriculum consists of three (3) semesters of clinical studies. Clinical studies are taken with AVMA- COE accredited schools or colleges of veterinary medicine in the United States, Canada and internationally. It is the student's responsibility to meet the criteria required by the clinical affiliate to enter their specific program. The individual schools decide whether or not to accept students recommended by RUSVM. Acceptance criteria vary from school to school and are subject to change at any time. Up-to- date acceptance criteria are shared with students prior to the clinical placement process. Students should be aware that cumulative grade point average and a failing grade in any course (s) may impact their clinical placement options.

#### **2.7.1.1 Definition of Semester Credit Hours**

##### *2.7.1.1.1 Semester Credit hour*

One semester credit hour is awarded upon satisfactory completion of a course that requires at least 14 hours of formalized instruction for the entire semester, excluding final exams. One hour of formalized instruction corresponds to a class meeting for 50 minutes and each in-class hour of instruction typically requires two hours of preparation or out-of-class assignments.

##### *2.7.1.1.2 Laboratory Semester Credit hour*

Normally, one credit hour is associated with a class meeting for 50 to 200 minutes per week for an entire semester (or the equivalent 750 to 3,000 semester-minutes, excluding final exam, in other meeting formats). Two semester credit hours could be earned for a class meeting for 150 to 300 minutes per week over the semester. This overlap in minutes in class allows for departmental discretion as approved by the Curriculum Committee.

##### *2.7.1.1.3 Research, Independent Study, Special Topics Semester Credit hour*

Credit hours associated with this type of instruction will be awarded depending upon the amount of activity associated with the course, the level of faculty supervision, and documented outside work activity.

## 2.7.2 Auditing Classes

Any student repeating a semester but not enrolled in a particular course may audit lectures, normally within their semester, on a space available basis, in accordance with the following rules:

- Students wishing to audit lectures must obtain the course director's consent.
- Laboratory sessions and other non-didactic teaching sessions (small group work, clinical rotations, etc.) may not be audited.
- All students must abide by appropriate classroom behavior, as described in the Code of Conduct (Section 1.6) and course syllabus.
- If limited space is available, priority of seating will be given to regularly enrolled students.
- Auditing students may not participate in Turning Point™ clicker questions, quizzes, or examinations for the course.
- In case of conflicts, regularly enrolled students will have priority for instructor office hours and/or TA sessions, related to the specific course.

The disregard of these guidelines may result in withdrawal of permission to audit a course.

## 2.7.3 Elective Policy

To enroll in an elective course, a student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5.

All elective courses are graded as Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). A grade of S or U will appear on the student's transcript but will not be calculated in the GPA. A student who receives an unsatisfactory grade will not be required to repeat the elective course or the semester.

If a student withdraws from an elective course, nothing will appear on his/her transcript.

## 2.7.4 Attendance

Individual instructors will determine the requirements and consequences for attendance, which will be approved by Curriculum Committee and described, in writing, at the beginning of each course in the course syllabi.

RUSVM is non-sectarian and does not close for the religious holidays of any specific denomination or group. Students who miss classes or laboratories without an approved excused absence will be responsible for the content of all missed course work. Examinations scheduled to occur on religious holidays will not be rescheduled.

As specified in the course syllabus at the beginning of a course, attending examinations and other required exercises is mandatory, except in the case of an approved excused absence. Please see information governing excused absences which are detailed in Section 2.11.3 Absence from Pre-Clinical Program of the Student Handbook.

## 2.7.5 Academic Support for Students

### 2.7.5.1 *Teaching Assistants*

RUSVM provides academic support in the way of teaching assistants for selected classes. The intent is to provide assistance to all students in those classes. RUSVM will pay a stipend at the end of each



semester to teaching assistants who have been engaged by written contract.

Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher and a grade of B or higher in the course in which they wish to assist, are eligible for teaching assistant nomination. Teaching assistants should be able to deliver information using a variety of methods in large or small groups and in classroom and laboratory settings. Although teaching assistants make every effort to be of assistance to students during the scheduled sessions, students are ultimately responsible for the material as presented by the professor.

### **2.7.5.2 Tutoring**

Students who want individual assistance beyond what is available through the RUSVM teaching assistant program may seek the services of tutors at their own expense. A list of eligible tutors is available from the Administration Office. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher are eligible to have their names listed on the RUSVM approved tutor list. Applications to become a tutor are available in the Administration Office.

### **2.7.5.3 Lecture Capture**

This service is an additional study tool and **should not be used as a substitute for regular class attendance**. Students must attend all academic activities as described in each course syllabi. The goal of the Lecture Capture service is to provide the following benefits to students:

- On-demand playback of all lectures available two (2) business days following the date the lecture was recorded;
- Access to lectures in previous semesters as individuals progress through the RUSVM academic program; and
- Access to recorded lectures on campus and anywhere in St. Kitts.

## **2.7.6 RUSVM Examinations**

Each course instructor determines the format of quizzes, examinations, and assignments. Normally each course has two progress and one final examination. Final examinations shall constitute no more than 50% of the final grade.

All courses included in the calculation of a grade point average have a final examination. That examination may cover material not covered on any prior examination, but it also has a significant cumulative component covering the entire semester's material.

All examinations are proctored by two or more proctors and are given on RUSVM premises. The Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs or the Dean may permit examination of a student in a different location, such as a hospital room, in an extreme case, or as required to reasonably accommodate students with disabilities.

All students must bring their official RUSVM identification card to all examinations. All students must be at their assigned locations 10 minutes prior to the beginning of an examination. Students arriving at

the examination location without their ID, or once the proctor has begun giving instructions, will be denied entry to the exam and will receive a mark of zero on the examination. Students, including those with accommodations, are not permitted to enter any examination more than 20 minutes after the examination begins. Students are not permitted to leave before 20 minutes after the onset of the examination unless all students are present.

A student leaving the room during an examination for any reason is not allowed to return.

No questions are allowed during examinations, except in those cases where identification of a structure (e.g., by pin placement at a station in an anatomy lab exam, pointer placement on a projected image or microscope slide in histology, pathology, etc.) requires clarification.

All semester progress examinations, except laboratory examinations, begin 10 minutes before the first class for that semester and end sharply 10 minutes before the next class. No additional time is allowed between classes.

Progress examinations, including midterms, are given according to the examination schedule, which is posted at the beginning of the semester. Changes are made only upon written approval of the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs.

No examinations are given the last week of scheduled classes (Week 14) except for final examinations of one and two-credit courses, laboratory and Vet Prep examinations.

Final examinations for all courses with three or more credit hours are given during the finals week (Week 15). It may cover new material, but it must have a significant cumulative (entire semester's material) component. These exams may last up to two hours.

Final course grades are available to students three business days after the end of the semester.

Students missing examinations receive a grade of F unless the student's absence has been approved. Absences may be excused, if approved, for reasons such as serious illness, non-elective hospitalization, and death in the immediate family. A request for an excused absence from an examination must be submitted prior to the absence, if possible, or immediately upon return to campus, along with documentation such as a death certificate or a medical report. Medical reports must contain specific information regarding the student's illness and medical treatment. The documentation must be provided within 24 hours of the course examination time or onset of symptoms, if possible. An excused absence from an examination may be granted based on the adequacy of the documentation submitted. Students have the option to appeal as described in Section 2.10 Appeal of Dismissal.

#### **2.7.6.1      *Make up examinations***

Make-up examinations for excused absences are different from the regular examinations and are not

given before the regularly scheduled examination. Progress make-up examinations are given within one week after students return from an approved leave. As feasible, the exams should be given in the order in which they were originally scheduled. Scheduling of all make-up exams should be done through the Manager, Assessments, Examinations and Scheduling. Make-up final examinations are typically given by the end of the last week of the semester break or, if approved by the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs, no later than the first week of the following semester.

A student with a non-excused or excused absence who misses a final exam will not be allowed to take any other subsequently scheduled exam during final exam week (Week 15). The Manager, Assessments, Examinations and Scheduling will send a schedule with the date and time for the make-up final examination(s) prior to the scheduled make-up exams. Each course instructor determines the format and content of a make-up examination.

Once the allotted time for an exam is complete, students are not permitted to answer any further questions. Students are responsible for their own time management during an exam. If a student fails to complete the exam on time, he/she will be graded only on the answers completed at that time and entered onto the scantron sheet.

Credit will NOT be given for blanks not filled in correctly by students on the scantron sheets at any time after they are handed in, regardless of answers marked on the examination paper.

Students will be assigned a seat for all examinations held on RUSVM premises. These assignments are on a per exam basis and a new seat will be assigned for each exam. Students who fail to sit in their assigned seat may fail their exam.

Students are required to be courteous to Examination Center personnel. Rudeness, and/or verbal abuse may result in disciplinary action.

Unless approved by the instructor, the following items are not permitted in the examination seating area while taking an exam:

- Cell phones, including Smartphones or other electronic devices;
- Calculators;
- Watches with alarms, computer, or memory capability;
- Recording devices;
- Filming devices;
- Head phones;
- Radios;
- Reference materials (books, notes, papers, etc.);
- extra writing material (scrap or otherwise); and
- Backpacks, briefcases, brimmed hats or sun glasses.

Additionally, students are not permitted to bring writing material or electronic devices to an

examination review held in the Examination Center unless given explicit instructions by a course instructor that it is permitted.

Students can only attend review sessions in the Examination Center if they:

- Are enrolled in the course, for that semester; and
- Have taken the exam being reviewed.

The LRC is a dedicated quiet area. Students are required to be quiet at all times inside and outside of the LRC while waiting to enter for an exam, when they are in the Examination Center both before and during exams unless given explicit permission otherwise, and when they are leaving the Examination Center.

### **2.7.7 RUSVM Grading Policy**

At the beginning of each course, faculty members provide students, in writing, a brief summary of how grades for the course are determined, detailing the weight assigned to each quiz, examination, or assignment. Once this information has been distributed, the faculty is not permitted to alter the requirements of the course or the manner in which grades are determined without express written permission of the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning. If approved, the amended grading policy will be distributed to students.

Grading is based on performance on the required course work. Individual extra work assignments to boost grades are not permitted.

Grade corrections for progress exams, as a result of numerical or technical error, must be made within 10 class days of grades being posted. Grade corrections that involve throwing out questions should be made such that no student is penalized.

Faculty members have the responsibility to provide RUSVM with a timely individual evaluation of the work of each student in their classes. The results of progress examinations during the semester are made available to students within seven (7) calendar days of the date of the examination or assessment.

Final course grades are submitted to the Office of the Registrar within 36 hours after a final examination in the course is given. Final course grades are approved by the course directors and reviewed by the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs, who will consult with course directors on any irregularities identified. Final grades are made available to students no later than three business days after the end of the semester.

Students are evaluated on the basis of the following criteria to the extent applicable to each course:

- Classroom and laboratory examinations;
- Completion of assignments;
- Class and laboratory attendance;
- Academic and professional honesty; and

- Professional and Technical Standards.

Faculty members provide the Office of the Registrar with a numerical and letter grade for each student in their classes based on the RUSVM Grading System. For pass-fail courses, students receive a final grade of Pass (P) for scores of 70% or higher or Fail (F) for scores below 70%. For elective courses, these are graded as Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). A grade of S or U will appear on the student's transcript but will not be calculated in the GPA.

At the end of each semester, the scholastic record of each student is reviewed and as a result, the student is promoted, placed on academic warning or probation, or dismissed. Please see Section 2.12.9 Clinical Year Dismissal, which speaks specifically to the regulations governing the Clinical semesters.

## 2.7.8 Grading System

Numerical scores are rounded to the nearest whole number and are recorded by the Office of the Registrar as letter grades as follows:

Grade	Rating	Grade Range
A =	Excellent	90% or higher
B+ =	Very Good	87-89%
B =	Good	80-86%
C+ =	Average	77-79%
C =	Passing	70-76%
F =	Failing	Below 70%

The Office of the Registrar records the following letter grades for courses that have not been completed:

*I* = *Incomplete*

*WP* = *Withdrawal Passing*

*WF* = *Withdrawal Failing*

*W* = *Withdrawal Prior to Examination*

Beginning with the January 2015 semester, for the duration of the pre-clinical semesters, students will be able to replace two F grades with the R grade, after repeating the course (s) and receiving a passing grade. Grades of R will not count in the student's cumulative GPA nor will credits be counted towards completion of the degree requirements. Please see details on the implementation of the R grade in Section 2.7.13.1.7 Grade Replacement.

## 2.7.9 Supplemental Examination

Supplemental examination provides an opportunity for a student who failed a course to be re-examined in that course.

With the exclusion of courses with significant laboratory component, a student who fails a course during the pre-clinical program will be granted a supplemental examination if the following criteria are met:

1. A student will be granted only one (1) supplemental examination in an academic semester.
2. A student will be granted a maximum of three supplemental examinations during the pre-clinical program (i.e. semesters 1-7).
3. To be eligible for a supplemental examination the overall course grade, including performance in the final examination, must be at least 65%.
4. To be eligible for a supplemental examination the grade in the final examination must be at least 65%.
5. Supplemental examination in a course will only be granted to students that have achieved an overall passing grade by the time of the final exam.
6. Supplemental examinations will only be granted to students that have taken the final exam on the officially scheduled date.

Eligible pre-clinical students interested in taking the supplemental examination can do so, understanding that:

- The content of the supplemental examination will be similar to that of the final exam.
- The format will be determined by the course director and communicated to the student in advance.
- The supplemental examination will take place between Tuesday and Friday prior to the beginning of the following semester.
- The weight of the supplemental examination will be the same as that of the final exam, as detailed in each course syllabus.
- The grade earned in the supplemental exam will be a raw score with no adjustments for course performance.
- The maximum final grade attainable in a course in which a supplemental examination is written shall be 70%.

Pre-clinical students who wish take a supplemental examination will receive notice of eligibility from the Office of the Registrar by 4:00 p.m. **two (2) calendar days** following the release of the semester results. Students who are approved to take the supplemental examination will be advised of same no later than five (5) business days before the scheduled date of that examination.

## 2.7.10 Grade Point Average Calculation

The grade point average is calculated by multiplying the following value for each letter grade by the number of credit hours for that course:

A =	4.0
B+ =	3.5
B =	3.0
C+ =	2.5
C =	2.0
F =	0.0

The grade point average includes both the original grade and the new grade in a repeated course. The grade point average does not include grades in pass-fail courses or grades of I, W, WP, WF and R. The grade point average is used to determine academic promotion and probation.

Each semester, students with a Grade Point Average of 4.0 will be named on the President's List, and students with a Grade Point Average of 3.5 or higher will be named on the Dean's List.

### **2.7.11 Graduation and Honors**

Students who have passed all pre-clinical courses, and who have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or greater, and who have satisfactorily completed and passed all of their final year in the clinical program are eligible for the degree of DVM from RUSVM.

Honors will be conferred as follows:

- Cumulative pre-clinical GPA of 3.8 or above receives graduation with Highest Honors.
- Cumulative pre-clinical GPA between 3.6 and 3.79 receives graduation with High Honors.
- Cumulative pre-clinical GPA between 3.5 and 3.59 receives graduation with Honors. Honors conferred will be noted upon the diploma and in the commencement program.

### **2.7.12 Student Survey for Outcome of Assessment**

RUSVM students are expected to complete evaluations and respond to surveys. All veterinary schools/colleges accredited by the AVMA Council on Education must conduct thorough and periodic evaluations of their programs. Collecting and evaluating survey data is a part of RUSVM's commitment to continually improve the quality of the educational program and student services. It is the student's (semesters 1-10) professional responsibility to provide truthful assessment and feedback. The information is used to guide the faculty and RUSVM leadership in meeting the University's mission. The survey instruments and frequency of assessment are developed by the faculty and/or RUSVM leadership team and are approved by the Dean.

### **2.7.13 Academic Standards**

The ARC is a faculty committee that implements the policies set forth in this Student Handbook. All academic matters, including grading policies, grade appeals and academic standing of students, are within the purview of the ARC. The ARC is advisory to the Dean. The decision of the Dean or his/her

designee on academic matters is final.

The ARC is chaired by the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning and consists of faculty members. The functions of the ARC are to:

- maintain the level of academic performance according to the academic policies and procedures of RUSVM;
- ensure that grades submitted are determined in a fair and equitable manner;
- consider and make decisions as to grade appeals; and
- evaluate and make recommendations on appeals of dismissal for academic reasons.

### ***2.7.13.1 Definitions of Academic Terms***

#### *2.7.13.1.1 Promotion*

To advance to the next level in the student's academic program.

#### *2.7.13.1.2 Academic Probation*

A finite period (e.g. the following semester) after an academic appeal has been granted, wherein a student must improve his/her academic performance as specifically required or be subject to dismissal.

#### *2.7.13.1.3 Academic Warning*

Except with respect to first semester students, a finite period (e.g. the following semester) after a student fails one course wherein a student must improve his/her academic performance as specifically required or be subject to dismissal. With respect to first semester students, Academic Warning means a finite period (e.g., the following semester) after he/she fails one or two courses wherein the student must improve his/her academic performance or be subject to dismissal.

#### *2.7.13.1.4 Dismissal*

The discharge of a student from RUSVM.

#### *2.7.13.1.5 Suspension*

A period during which a student will not be allowed to enroll in classes and may have to satisfy special requirements prior to returning to his/her academic program.



#### *2.7.13.1.6 Good Standing*

Students maintain good standing by complying with all academic policies and procedures and remaining current in financial obligations. RUSVM reserves the right to withhold services, transcripts, grades, and certifications from students who are not in good standing.

#### *2.7.13.1.7 Grade Replacement*

The RUSVM Grade Replacement Policy is designed to provide students with an opportunity to replace previously failed grades after repeating a course and receiving a passing grade.

- Beginning with the January 2015 semester and beyond, students will be able to replace F grades in their GPA after repeating the course and receiving a passing grade;
- Grades of R will not be counted in the student's cumulative GPA nor will credits be counted towards completion of the degree requirements;
- Failed courses for which grade replacement has been granted will remain on the student's permanent record, including their transcript, marked with an R;
- Grade Replacement only applies to grades in the pre-clinical portion of the program;
- Grade Replacement allows for students to replace grades in a maximum of 2 courses during the length of the program;
- Additional failed courses will remain in the cumulative GPA calculation and will appear in the transcript accordingly.

### **2.7.14 Pre-Clinical Sciences Satisfactory Academic Progress**

#### ***2.7.14.1 Pre-Clinical Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)***

Satisfactory academic progress represents an acceptable level of performance in meeting degree requirements within specified time periods. It is used in both academic evaluation and in determination of financial aid eligibility. It requires completion of the pre-clinical portion of the curriculum in nine semesters or less and completion of the clinical portion in the normal time allowed by the Clinical Affiliate. Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress are subject to dismissal. Students must complete the veterinary program in no more than 15 semesters of instruction. Any students who do not complete the program within the timeframes listed will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid pursuant to Title IV of the US Higher Education Act, and may be withdrawn.

At the end of each semester, each student's academic progress is evaluated by RUSVM. This evaluation involves two metrics, one quantitative and one qualitative:

- The quantitative measure evaluates the student's pace of progression through the program with the maximum timeframe. The pace of progression is calculated by dividing the cumulative course credits the student has successfully completed by the cumulative course credits the student has attempted;
- Students in their first academic year are subject to a pace of progression rate of 50%. Students in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year or higher are subject to a pace of progression of 66.67%. Please note that courses with a grade of W, WP, WF and I are not counted in the attempted credits. Transfer credits accepted will count as attempted and completed credits for the calculation;

- The qualitative measure evaluates the student's cumulative GPA. Students are required to maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA in order to meet the qualitative measure at the time of review;
- Courses receiving the R Grade will not count towards the GPA calculation, but will be counted towards pace of progression.

#### **2.7.14.2      *Pre-Clinical Student Academic Progress Implications on Financial Aid***

Students may receive financial aid while on Academic Warning or Academic Probation. Any student on Academic Warning/Probation for two consecutive semesters will be ineligible to receive Title IV financial aid until his/her satisfactory student academic progress is regained.

In addition to the criteria listed above, students receiving Title IV financial aid in their first two enrolled semesters are expected to earn a 50 percent completion rate and all other students receiving Title IV federal aid are expected to achieve a 66.67 percent completion rate for their coursework throughout all semesters. This means that the completed credit hours divided by the attempted credit hours must meet or exceed 50 percent for students in their first two periods of enrollment; all others must meet or exceed 66.67 percent in order to be maintaining academic progress. Students failing to meet the 66.67 percent must also submit an appeal to the Director of Student Finance. Grades of I, W, WP, and WF do not count toward this total. For students on Title IV financial aid, it is highly recommended they see a Financial Aid representative to address any questions regarding their academic progress and financial aid implications.

### **2.7.15      Grade Appeal**

The purpose of a grade appeal is to correct an error in the final grade for a course.

#### **2.7.15.1      *Reasons for a Grade Appeal***

An appeal will not result in the change of a grade unless the student submits convincing evidence that one or more of these reasons exist:

- The faculty member has substantially varied from the process of calculating the grade that is described in the course outline; and/or
- The grade is a result of unlawful discrimination towards the student, by the Course Director or an instructor within the course, on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or other similar improper considerations other than academic performance.

Pre-clinical students who wish to appeal a grade will first contact the Course Director via e-mail. Students may appeal to the ARC based only on the grounds as presented in Section 2.7.15.1. The letter of appeal shall be submitted to the Associate Dean for Student and Alumni Affairs with appropriate documentation, as may be required according to specific guidelines provided by the Office of the Registrar.

All Grade appeal documentation must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. **seven (7) calendar days** following the release of the semester results.

The appeal will be referred to and evaluated by the ARC. The Office of the Registrar will notify the student of the ARC's decision via email on Wednesday of the first week of the semester.

The ARC will review the appeal, and the Office of the Registrar will notify the student of the outcome of the appeal via email by Wednesday of the first week of the new term, following the issuance of the grade being appealed. The decision of the ARC regarding grade appeals is final and not subject to any further appeal.

## **2.8 ACADEMIC WARNING AND PROBATION**

Warning or Probationary status of students will be determined by the Office of the Registrar based on the student's academic performance and, if appropriate, recommendations by the ARC.

Students will be placed on Academic Warning for the next semester for which they are registered if they are required to repeat one course from a previous semester and/or their cumulative GPA is below the required minimum of 2.0.

Students will be placed on Academic Probation for the next semester for which they are registered if they have successfully appealed a dismissal after failing two or more courses (three or more for first semester) in a previous semester and/or their cumulative GPA is below the required minimum of 2.0.

All students who are on academic warning or academic probation, will automatically be placed on a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) plan. Documentation to be completed by students regarding the SAP will be sent to all at the beginning of each semester by email and is to be returned to the Office of the Registrar before the end of the first week of the semester.

Students will be removed from Academic Warning or Academic Probation if, at the end of the semester on Academic Warning/Academic Probation, they pass all courses and their cumulative GPA is 2.0 or higher.

Academic Warning and Academic Probation and the repeating of courses have important financial aid consequences in terms of eligibility, details of which are available in Section 2.15.3 Academic Warning and Academic Probation.

Students must clear any academic deficiency and have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher by the end of the pre-clinical curriculum or they will not advance to their clinical training.

## 2.9 DISMISSAL

Students may be dismissed from the University for failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress, violation of the Code of Conduct violation of or failure to fulfill sanctions imposed on the student after a Code of Conduct procedure, not meeting the Professional Standards and/or disruptive or unprofessional behavior. A dismissed student may not reapply for admission.

Events that may result in dismissal include but are not limited to:

- Except for students enrolled in 1st Semester, receiving two or more Fs or two or more WFs in a semester;
- Receiving an F or a WF in a course being repeated for any reason, including but not limited to receipt of a prior F in that course or voluntary repetition of that course;
- Receiving three F or WF grades during the pre-clinical program (semester 1–7);
- Failure to satisfy the conditions of Academic Warning or remaining subject to Academic Warning more than three semesters;
- Failure to complete:
  - the pre-clinical curriculum in a maximum of nine semesters (student cannot repeat more than two times);
  - the clinical curriculum in the normal time allowed by the Clinical Affiliate; or
  - the program within 15 semesters of instruction; or
- Dismissal from a Clinical Affiliate for academic or non-academic reasons.

## 2.10 APPEAL OF DISMISSAL

### 2.10.1 Appeal of Dismissal of Pre-Clinical Students

Students in the Veterinary Preparatory Program (Vet Prep) must pass all courses in order to be accepted into the RUSVM pre-clinical program. There is not an appeal process for failed courses in the Vet Prep Program.

Pre-clinical students who wish to appeal a dismissal shall submit a letter of appeal addressed to the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs, with appropriate documentation, as may be required by the ARC, according to specific guidelines provided by the Office of the Registrar. All documentation must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. seven (7) calendar days following the release of the semester results subject to the appeal. The dismissal appeal letter should include:

- The student's views on his/her level of preparation for the failed course(s);
- Any extenuating circumstances which contributed to the student's dismissal; and
- If reinstated, the student's plan(s) for improving his/her academic outcomes.

Students will be allowed to address the ARC on the day of the Appeals Meeting. The ARC will review

appeal, and the Office of the Registrar will notify the student of the outcome of the appeal via email by Wednesday of the first week of the new term. A student wishing to meet with the Dean, or designee, regarding the ARC decision may make an appointment for Thursday of the first week of classes. The Dean's, or designee's decision is final and is not subject to any further appeal.

The ARC will not consider dismissal appeals from any student who has been dismissed in a previous semester and has been readmitted with the condition that any further course failure will result in automatic dismissal.

Questions about this policy should be directed to the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs.

## 2.11 PRE-CLINICAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT

### 2.11.1 Registration of New Pre-Clinical Students

New DVM students must register online using the MyRoss web self-service tool, which is available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross). In addition, DVM students must check-in in person on the St. Kitts campus during orientation. Students must present a valid passport as identification in order to receive an official RUSVM student identification card. No unregistered student will be admitted to classes. With the exception of students who have received an approved excused absence, students arriving after orientation may not be permitted to check-in for the semester, and any financial aid disbursements received by RUSVM will be returned to the lender.

A new student's enrollment is contingent upon submission of all documentation required for admission. Any missing documentation that is specified in the offer of admission must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar by the end of the first semester. If the documentation is not received within that time, the student will be subject to administrative withdrawal and may lose the privilege to register for a subsequent semester.

### 2.11.2 Registration of Continuing Pre-Clinical Students

Continuing students must register online using the MyRoss web self-service tool, which is available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross). Students who do not register by the prescribed deadline determined by the Office of the Registrar are subject to administrative withdrawal.

All returning students must check-in in person on the St. Kitts campus by the end of the first day of classes for the semester, and do so without penalty. Check-in is permitted until 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday of the first week of the semester. ***Students checking in after the first day of class are subject to a one-time payment of a late fee of US\$100*** unless the Dean, or their designee, grants an exception. Students must present the official RUSVM student identification card to ensure proper identification. A charge of \$25.00 EC is imposed for issuance of a duplicate identification card.

The consequence to any student arriving after the check-in period, which ends at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday of the first week of the semester, will be the possibility of:

- not being permitted to check-in for the semester;
- being subject to administrative withdrawal; and
- having any financial aid disbursements received by RUSVM returned to the lender.

A student who is unable to check-in on campus during the registration period because of a personal emergency (i.e., serious illness) must notify the Office of the Registrar in writing before the check-in period ends. Fax or electronic communication acceptable, and faxes may be sent to 869-465-1203. The

Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs, or designee, may grant permission to register late upon receipt of valid documentation, outlining the situation.

### **2.11.3 Absence From Pre-Clinical Program**

The curriculum of RUSVM is designed to be a series of integrated, consecutively scheduled learning experiences. Interruptions of the educational program are academically undesirable and are of concern to veterinary medical licensure boards. They also can affect financial aid eligibility and loan repayment status.

**Students in Pre-Clinical semesters** are advised to consult the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs or Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning about the academic impact of any interruption of their studies prior to the granting of leave. Please see Section 2.15.6 Tuition Policy During Approved Absences for implications of approved absences on Financial Aid.

The only authorized absence from a program are the emergency leave and academic leave of absence, as described in this Student Handbook.

All students returning from an authorized absence must report to the Office of the Registrar and must pursue the curriculum then in effect. They are subject to all policies that are in force at that time and must pay the current tuition and fees.

#### **2.11.3.1 Emergency Absences (ELOA)**

Students may have unavoidable, non-academic reasons for interrupting their enrollment during a semester. With the completion of the appropriate forms to the Office of the Registrar and approval of the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs, a pre-clinical student may be temporarily excused from classes during a semester due to documented emergency circumstances, such as severe illness, major injury to the student, or a similar emergency or death in the student's immediate family. An emergency absence is authorized only when a student intends to and can return within two weeks to complete all coursework for that semester.

A student who is unable to return from an emergency absence within two weeks must request an academic leave of absence (see ALOA below) for the remainder of the semester. If a student on an emergency absence does not request an ALOA or return within two weeks, the student will be administratively withdrawn, and must re-apply for admission, except in special documented circumstances.

When an emergency absence is extended into an ALOA, course grades of I will be recorded if the student has passing grades in all courses. If the student returns at the beginning of the following semester and repeats all interrupted coursework, the I grades are changed to the grades earned in the subsequent semester. If the student does not repeat the courses during the following semester, the I grades are changed to WF or WP grades.



If the student has a failing grade in one or more courses, course grades of WP or WF will be recorded and the student must apply for readmission as outlined in Section 2.11.6 Administrative Withdrawals. The interrupted semester is not counted when determining time limits for satisfactory academic progress when the student returns the following semester. In the case of an ALOA following an emergency absence, the student may be eligible for tuition waiver (see Section 2.15.4 Tuition, Credit, and Waiver Policies). It is highly recommended that students seek the counsel of the Office of Student Finance to learn of the implications of an ALOA on their financial aid status before seeking an ALOA.

If a request for Emergency or Academic Leave is denied, students have the option to appeal to the ARC. This must be done in writing, and must convincingly detail the circumstances of the request.

### **2.11.3.2      *Academic Leave of Absence (ALOA)***

The pre-clinical section of the DVM program is scheduled in three semesters per calendar year with short breaks between semesters. A student who needs a longer break between semesters for personal reasons may request an ALOA as outlined below. The ALOA, as described, may begin upon the completion of a semester. This leave must be requested after the completion of one semester, and before the end of the first week of school in the next, will generally be granted for only one semester, and the student must return in the following semester.

An ALOA must be requested by submitting a completed Academic Leave of Absence form (available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross)), stating specific reasons and an intent-to-return date. The ALOA must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar and approved by the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs or the Dean. The ALOA is not valid until it is fully processed and recorded by the Office of the Registrar and the student has received confirmation. Forms may be emailed to the Office of the Registrar at [skregistrar@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:skregistrar@rossvet.edu.kn), or faxed to 732-509-4820, and the Office of the Registrar may fax or electronically communicate confirmations.

During the pre-clinical program, the ALOA may also begin following an emergency leave and will last through to the end of that semester. The student must then return at the beginning of the next semester. The ALOA may be renewed, prior to expiration, for an additional semester, based on the circumstances of the request.

A student who does not return from an ALOA at the specified time will be administratively withdrawn, effective at the start of the ALOA period. **This may affect financial aid obligations, as described in the Financial Planning Guide,** and detailed in Section 2.15 Student Finance.

### **2.11.3.3      *Unauthorized Leaves***

A student who takes an unauthorized leave during a semester or a scheduled period of pre-clinical training will be administratively withdrawn (see Section 2.11.6 Administrative Withdrawals) in addition to receiving failing grades.

Students wishing to return to school after an unauthorized leave must apply for readmission. The past performance of these students will be reviewed by the ARC to determine whether they can be readmitted and, determine conditions of readmission. Students who take an unauthorized leave should not assume that their application for readmission will be granted.

#### **2.11.3.4      *Absence From Classes***

The phoned or emailed request for an excused absence must be followed by written documentation, such as a death certificate or a medical report, immediately upon the student's return to campus. If it is a medical report it must contain specific information regarding the student's illness and medical treatment. The excused absence will ultimately be granted only if the appropriate documentation is submitted as required.

The following circumstances exist to justify an absence:

- Attendance at the annual SCAVMA Symposium, AVMA Student Legislative Fly In, or required SCAVMA or NAVC delegate activities;
- Attendance at a national event, such as the Veterinary Leadership Experience (VLE), for which a student has been selected to represent the University;
- Participation as the presenting author of a RUSVM faculty-mentored project at a scientific meeting (requires submitting a Request to be Absent Form);
- Military or legal obligations, such as subpoena or jury duty; or
- Students who may be absent due to a medical or family emergency. Please see Emergency Leave of Absence Section 2.11.3.1 Emergency Absences of this Student Handbook).

The above mentioned activities require the submission of the *Absence from Classes* form, and pre-approval from the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs well before the onset of classes or exams, and at least six weeks in advance of travel.

#### **2.11.4      *Withdrawals and Deferrals***

Students who have withdrawn, have been administratively withdrawn, or have gone on an ALOA and wish to return to school must apply for readmission or reinstatement by the end of Week 12 of the preceding semester in which they wish to resume their studies. Such readmission or reinstatement must be approved by the ARC and is not guaranteed. The ARC generally reviews the readmission applications during Week 13 each semester.

Readmitted students:

- are subject to all academic policies and tuition and fees in effect at the time of reinstatement;
- who were failing one or more courses at the time of withdrawal will be on academic probation if they are readmitted; and
- may also lose financial aid eligibility if they are still on academic probation in succeeding semesters.

Although a leave of absence may be authorized in limited circumstances, failure to return to school at the scheduled end of a leave of absence is considered a withdrawal as of the last date of academically

related activity. Any leave of absence must be requested and approved in advance, may not exceed 180 days, and may not be granted within 12 months of a previous leave of absence. An interruption of enrollment status that does not qualify as a leave of absence is considered a withdrawal as of the last date of academically related activity.

### **2.11.5 Student Withdrawals**

Students may not withdraw from a single course during a semester, except for a previously passed course taken during a repeating semester. They must withdraw completely from the school. Pre-clinical students may begin the withdrawal process by obtaining a withdrawal form from the Office of the Registrar, and appropriate clearances from the Library, Office of Student Finance, and approval of the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs. Such students will receive W, WP, or WF on their transcripts depending on whether they were passing or failing a course at the time of their withdrawal, as described in the “Grading System” in Section 2.7.8 of this Student Handbook. If a student intends to return, he/she must indicate the date of when he/she intends to return on the withdrawal form, and then must reapply through the Admissions Office.

Tuition refunds and financial aid returns, if any, will be determined based on the withdrawal date or the last day of academically related activity.

Students who withdraw after successfully completing the semester, and who return after no more than two semesters, will be permitted to advance to the next semester. If such students return after more than two semesters, the ARC will determine their placement in the curriculum.

### **2.11.6 Administrative Withdrawals**

The Office of the Registrar enters an administrative withdrawal in the student’s record when the student does any of the following:

- fails to register online by the prescribed deadlines determined by the Office of the Registrar;
- fails to check-in on the prescribed deadlines determined by the Office of the Registrar;
- leaves school after one semester ends and does not return the following semester, without applying for and receiving an approved leave of absence;
- does not return at the time specified for the end of an approved leave of absence;
- fails to attend classes in week 1 of a semester; or
- is administratively withdrawn under special circumstances by the Dean.

All students who are administratively withdrawn will be reported as withdrawn effective the last day they attended classes. The date of withdrawal must be reported to the US Department of Education if these students had student Title IV loans.

### **2.11.7 Deferrals**

Prior to the start of classes in the pre-clinical program, students admitted to a specific semester may request to defer their admission to a subsequent semester. This is limited to no more than the next two semesters. Those who do not begin enrollment on the deferred date are considered to have deactivated their applications and must re-apply for admission. Applications for deferrals must be made to the Office of Admissions. Students deferring to a future semester must meet all the requirements in effect for that semester.

Once a student has registered on campus, that student may ask the Dean to approve deferral of enrollment to the following semester. The request must be submitted prior to the end of Week 1 of the semester.

Unless a deferral has been requested, students who are admitted for a given semester but fail to appear on campus and register for that semester are considered to have deactivated their applications and must re-apply for admission.

### **2.11.8 Transfer Students**

#### ***2.11.8.1 Student Transfer to RUSVM***

Students who have completed a portion of the curriculum at another approved school of veterinary medicine may apply for admission into RUSVM. Those who successfully enroll may attain advanced standing through an assessment of equivalency of courses and credits. Students seeking advanced standing will apply for this through the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs.

#### ***2.11.8.2 Student Transfer from RUSVM***

The process to transfer from RUSVM to another institution is the same as requesting to be voluntarily withdrawn. The process to gain admission into the institution of transfer is solely the responsibility of the student, and all required data from RUSVM must be requested according to specific service guidelines available through MyRoss.

Additionally, RUSVM is not liable for any course equivalency for students transferring to another institution. RUSVM course equivalency for other institutions is solely determined by the institution to which students transfer.

## **2.12 CLINICAL ACADEMIC AND ENROLLMENT STANDARDS**

RUSVM contracts with AVMA-COE (American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education) accredited schools and colleges (Clinical Affiliates) to provide clinical training and performance evaluation of students during the final year of Training. RUSVM students attend the Clinical Affiliate through the RUSVM clinical program along with students from the Clinical Affiliate and are subject to both the academic standards of RUSVM and the Clinical Affiliate.

### **2.12.1 Clinical Placement**

#### **2.12.1.1 Clinical Affiliate School Academic Requirements**

RUSVM Clinical Affiliates have specific requirements to consider RUSVM students for clinical placement at their institutions. It is the student's responsibility to meet the criteria established and required by a particular Clinical Affiliate for entering into its program. During clinical placement, RUSVM presents RUSVM students to RUSVM Clinical Affiliates. The individual Clinical Affiliates decide whether or not to accept students recommended by RUSVM. Acceptance criteria vary from school to school and are subject to change at any time. Up-to-date criteria for consideration of presentation to Clinical Affiliates are shared with students immediately prior to the clinical placement process. Students should be aware that cumulative GPA and a failing grade in any course(s) will impact their eligibility to be presented for placement at specific Clinical Affiliates. While it is not an eligibility criterion, GPA trends may be used by Clinical Affiliates in deciding whether or not to accept a RUSVM student presented to them for clinical placement.

#### **2.12.1.2 Clinical Placement Process**

The overall goal of the Clinical Placement is to provide all RUSVM students the opportunity to attain their DVM degree. Clinical placement occurs at the beginning of the seventh (7th) semester. RUSVM seventh (7th) semester students identify four (4) Clinical Affiliates that best match their career goals for placement. These four choices are weighted equally. Students can list as preferences only those Clinical Affiliates for which they are eligible based on the school-specific criteria as noted above. Exceptions to the school-specific GPA and other criteria will not be made. To achieve our goal RUSVM will make placement decisions based on the following objectives:

- The number one objective is the placement of ALL RUSVM STUDENTS at a Clinical Affiliate.
- The second objective is to place all students to satisfy the contractual requirements of each of RUSVM's Clinical Affiliates. Although the final acceptance is done by the Clinical Affiliate, RUSVM will use all prior knowledge and experiences with the Clinical Affiliates to increase the chances of acceptance of all RUSVM students presented.
- The third objective is to maintain and improve the relationships between RUSVM with the Clinical Affiliates. Wherever possible, each group of RUSVM students presented to a Clinical Affiliate will be balanced academically to mirror the RUSVM class GPA.
- The fourth objective is to try to match a Clinical Affiliate that suits the student career goals. Personal reasons are considered but are not necessarily a determining factor for clinical placement.

E\*Value™ is used for the computerized clinical placement process. Instructions and a link on how to use the clinical placement survey are provided by and supported by RUSVM's IT department (SKITSupport@rossvet.edu.kn). The survey opens on the first few days of the semester and closes approximately 24 hours later.

### **2.12.1.3 Accommodations of Students with Disabilities – Clinical Placement Process**

If a qualified student wishes to request placement at a particular affiliate as a reasonable accommodation for a disability, the request should be submitted at least sixty (60) days prior to the start of the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) semester. It is the responsibility of the student seeking an accommodation to submit a timely request with such supporting documentation as may be required. Students are advised that the placement process is a complex one that occurs in a compressed time frame and, thus, making a request at the earliest opportunity is essential for it to be considered in a timely manner. Certain Clinical Affiliates offer a very limited number of slots to RUSVM, which, once assigned to another student, will not be reallocated. Accordingly, students who do not afford sufficient time for their accommodations requests to be fully considered may have to take a leave of absence for a semester in order to be afforded placement at a particular Clinical Affiliate as a reasonable accommodation.

Students seeking placement at a particular Clinical Affiliate as a reasonable accommodation must be otherwise qualified to attend the Clinical Affiliate.

Requests for accommodations as they pertain to clinical placement should be made, and will be processed, according to the policy set forth in Section 2.12.1.3 Accommodations of Students with Disabilities – Clinical Placement Process.

### **2.12.1.4 Clinical Year Accommodations (at the Clinical Affiliate)**

To secure accommodations during the clinical year, RUSVM students must contact the appropriate Clinical Affiliate representative to request accommodations for the clinical year. The Clinical Affiliate's policies and procedures will determine whether a requested accommodation may be granted. The Clinical Affiliate representative contact information will be shared after clinical placement has concluded.

Although RUSVM may have granted a student's request for reasonable accommodations during the pre-clinical phase of the curriculum, it can give no assurances that the clinical training institution can or will provide an accommodations in the clinical setting. An RUSVM student seeking an accommodation from a Clinical Affiliate is responsible for making a timely request, with sufficient supporting documentation, to that institution. The Accommodations Coordinator is available to assist RUSVM students with the accommodations processes of the Clinical Affiliate but RUSVM has no role in, or control over, any Clinical Affiliate's determinations with respect to any such requests for accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student seeking an accommodation to submit a timely request with sufficient supporting documentation to the Clinical Affiliate; failure to do so may jeopardize the Clinical Affiliate's ability to meet the request in a timely manner.

### **2.12.2 Clinical Year Academic Standards and Professional Standards**

Students remain enrolled in and receive academic credit from RUSVM during the clinical year. Students attending a Clinical Affiliate site are not eligible to receive academic credit from the Clinical Affiliate, nor are they eligible to receive a degree from the Clinical Affiliate based on their participation in the RUSVM clinical curriculum.

At the end of each academic semester, the Clinical Affiliate submits an evaluation form completed by veterinary faculty from the Clinical Affiliate. RUSVM assigns grades to the students based on consultation and the recommendations of the Clinical Affiliate. Students making unsatisfactory academic progress at a Clinical Affiliate are subject to termination at the Clinical Affiliate and subsequent dismissal from RUSVM. Clinical students making unsatisfactory academic progress at a Clinical Affiliate will not be relocated or transferred to an alternate Clinical Affiliate.

In addition to the academic and professional standards, of RUSVM, clinical students are subject to the academic rules and regulations and the professional standards of the Clinical Affiliate including any right to appeal using that program's appeals process. A student's professional conduct may be assessed and addressed by the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs or referred to the ARC at any time during a student's tenure at RUSVM or at a Clinical Affiliate.

Students in the clinical year are required and expected to comply with the policies and procedures of the Clinical Affiliate they attend, as well as those contained in this Student Handbook. Rules regarding appropriate conduct on-campus or during the clinical year (within the entire veterinary curriculum) also apply to conduct on social media platforms.

### **2.12.3 Clinical Year Curriculum**

The clinical curriculum consists of three semesters of clinical studies. Clinical studies are with an AVMA-COE accredited school or college of veterinary medicine. The clinical year curriculum is described at: <http://www.rossu.edu/veterinary-school/clinical/Curriculum.cfm>.

### **2.12.4 Clinical Year Registration**

Students in the clinical training phase of the curriculum register at the Clinical Affiliate where they are assigned, and they must follow the registration requirements of Clinical Affiliate. Tuition to attend the clinical year is paid to RUSVM. Various other nominal clinical year fees may be required by Clinical Affiliates (e.g. parking fees, access fees, program fees, etc.).

Students must have active and current health insurance that is acceptable to the Clinical Affiliate throughout the student's participation in the RUSVM clinical program. Upon request, proof of health insurance is required.



Students may not defer any scheduled clinical year semester.

## **2.12.5 Clinical Sciences Satisfactory Academic Progress**

### **2.12.5.1 Clinical Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

During the Clinical Program students are reviewed after completing each academic semester. Any student receiving a grade below a C will be reviewed by the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs and will make such recommendations to the Dean as he/she deems appropriate within the guidelines stated below.

Students receiving more than one grade of F or WF on rotations during a single semester are subject to dismissal from RUSVM. A dismissed student may submit a written appeal to his/her dismissal pursuant to Section 2.12.10 Appeal of Dismissal of Clinical Students.

Students must also maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0. Students not meeting this criterion will be subject to dismissal. A dismissed student may submit a written appeal to his/her dismissal pursuant to Section 2.12.10 Appeal of Dismissal of Clinical Students.

If the student appeals the adverse SAP determination and RUSVM determines that the student should be able to make SAP during the subsequent term of enrollment and meet RUSVM's SAP standards or if RUSVM develops an academic plan for that student, that if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet RUSVM's SAP standards by a specific point in time, then RUSVM may place the student on Academic/Financial Aid Probation.

A student who is reinstated on academic/financial aid probation may receive federal financial aid for an additional term of enrollment. While a student is on Academic/financial Aid Probation, RUSVM will require the student to fulfill specific terms and conditions in accordance with the academic plan, such as engaging in recommended RUSVM activities designed to improve performance.

At the end of the one term of enrollment while on Academic/Financial Aid Probation, in order to remain enrolled at RUSVM and qualify for future federal financial aid funds, the student must meet RUSVM's SAP standards OR must meet the requirements of the academic plan developed by RUSVM.

A student on Academic/Financial Aid Probation may still be dismissed if he or she fulfills the criteria for academic dismissal (see academic dismissal criteria above).

Students must pass all courses while on Academic/Financial Aid Probation. A student who receives a grade of F or WF while on Academic Probation is subject to dismissal.



No course or semester may be repeated more than once.

#### **2.12.5.2      *Clinical Sciences Student Academic Progress Implications on Financial Aid***

Students may receive financial aid while on Academic/Financial Aid Probation.

Any student on Academic Probation for two consecutive semesters will not be eligible to receive Title IV financial aid until his/her satisfactory student academic progress is regained.

Students are expected to achieve a 66.67 percent completion rate for their coursework throughout the clinical curriculum. This means that the completed credit hours divided by the attempted credit hours must meet or exceed 66.67 percent in order to be maintaining academic progress. Students failing to meet the 66.67 percent must also submit an appeal to the Associate Dean for Veterinary Clinical Affairs and the Director of Student Finance. Grades of incomplete, W, WP, and WF do not count toward this total. For students on Title IV financial aid, it is highly recommended they see a Financial Aid representative to address any questions regarding their academic progress and financial aid implications.

#### **2.12.6      *Absence From Clinical Program***

The clinical year curriculum is designed to be a series of integrated, consecutively scheduled learning experiences. During the clinical training year, students must also abide by the attendance policies and procedures of the Clinical Affiliate they attend.

Students in clinical training must abide by the policies and procedures of the institutions they are attending AS WELL AS those of RUSVM.

The ALOA for RUSVM clinical students is official only when both RUSVM and the Clinical Affiliate grant their permission. During the clinical program, the ALOA (academic and/or medical) must be requested in writing by contacting the Office of the Registrar and completing an ALOA form (available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross)), stating specific reasons and an intent-to-return date. This form must be approved and signed by the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs.

An ALOA is not valid until it is fully processed and recorded by the Office of the Registrar and the student has received confirmation. Forms may be faxed to the Office of the Registrar at fax number 732-509-4820, and the Office of the Registrar may fax or electronically communicate confirmations.

Additionally, Clinical students must contact the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs about any

interruption in their clinical year curriculum.

### **2.12.7 Clinical Year Leave**

Clinical students need to seek the approval of the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs for an emergency absence.

During the clinical program, an LOA (academic and/or medical grounds) must be requested in writing by contacting the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs who will inform the Office of the Registrar. The student will complete the LOA form (available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross)), stating specific reasons and an intent-to-return date. The request for an LOA must be approved by the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs.

The LOA is not valid until it is fully processed and recorded by the Office of the Registrar and the student has received an approved confirmation copy. Forms may be faxed to the Office of the Registrar at fax number 732-509-4820, and the Office of the Registrar may fax or electronically communicate confirmations.

Additionally, the Clinical Affiliate must also grant a leave of absence from their program (under their guidelines) for the RUSVM LOA to become official. As stated above, an LOA for RUSVM clinical students is official only when both RUSVM and the Clinical Affiliate grant their permission for a leave of absence. Be aware that a LOA may have consequences on your financial aid. Please contact the Office of Student Finance prior to beginning an ALOA.

### **2.12.8 Clinical Year Administrative Withdrawals**

RUSVM students during the clinical year may not withdraw without the consent of both the Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs and the Clinical Affiliate they are attending. The request must be made in writing with both RUSVM and the Clinical Affiliate. The request for withdrawal will be considered on an individual basis by both programs. Students will be given written permission, if obtained, from both RUSVM and the Clinical Affiliate.

### **2.12.9 Clinical Year Dismissal**

In addition to the academic/professional/ethical rules governing all RUSVM students, RUSVM students in their clinical year are subject to the academic/behavioral/ethical rules and regulations of the Clinical Affiliate they attend. In the event that a student is not progressing successfully in the clinical curriculum at the Clinical Affiliate, the RUSVM Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs is notified by the Clinical Affiliate. RUSVM students not progressing successfully are subject to termination at the

Clinical Affiliate and subsequent dismissal from RUSVM. Upon dismissal from the Clinical Affiliate, dismissed RUSVM clinical students are subject to the academic rules and regulations at the Clinical Affiliate including any right to appeal using the Clinical Affiliate program's rules and regulations.

Students failing a rotation will be subject to the policies and procedures of the Clinical Affiliate and their subsequent determination and recommendation will be communicated to the RUSVM Associate Dean, Veterinary Clinical Affairs. The student may be allowed to repeat the rotation on academic probation. If the student is required to submit an appeal and is approved, the student may repeat the rotation(s) on probation.

The RUSVM Dean may dismiss a student from RUSVM during the clinical year if the student is not making satisfactory academic progress or breaches professional conduct or ethical standards.

### **2.12.10 Appeal of Dismissal of Clinical Students**

Students dismissed from a Clinical Affiliate program must appeal the decision through the Clinical Affiliate in accordance with that institution's academic policies.

The RUSVM Dean, or the designee, will review the Clinical Affiliate's appeal decision. Upon review, the RUSVM Dean, or designee, may elect to dismiss the student from the RUSVM program. The RUSVM Dean, or designee, may also re-admit a student. The student is subject to being readmitted on Probation, which may include stipulations which will be outlined in writing and provided to the student.

The RUSVM Dean's, or the designee's, decision for dismissal is final. A dismissed student may not reapply for admission to RUSVM.

### **2.12.11 Vacations**

During the clinical training program, students are subject to the vacation rules of the Clinical Affiliate they are attending for that segment. Prior to taking a vacation the student should contact the Office of the Registrar in New Jersey to see how it impacts his/her graduation date.

### **2.12.12 Clinical Year Student Surveys**

RUSVM clinical year students are expected to complete evaluations and respond to surveys. All veterinary schools/colleges accredited by the AVMA COE must conduct thorough and periodic evaluations of their programs. Collecting and evaluating survey data is a part of RUSVM's commitment to continually improve the quality of the educational program and student services. It is the student's professional responsibility to provide truthful assessment and feedback. The information is used to guide the faculty and RUSVM leadership in meeting the University's mission.

## **2.13 REGISTRAR SERVICES**

### **2.13.1 MyRoss Self-Service Tool**

MyRoss is a student self-service tool designed to empower students with access to their records via the Web. The following information can be accessed:

- Personal information: View and update address, phone, email, and emergency contact information;
- Financial Aid: Apply for financial aid, review status of loans and document requirements, accept your financial aid award, and more;
- Students Accounts: View account summary, make a payment, obtain health insurance, waive health insurance, and more; and
- Registrar: View grades and holds, print an unofficial transcript, request an official transcripts, submit various forms online, and more.

### **2.13.2 Student queries through Salesforce**

Salesforce is RUSVM's Customer Relationship Management system where we respond and address students' questions and concerns. Students can submit their inquiries when they log into their MyRoss and AskRoss accounts.

### **2.13.3 Letter of Good Standing**

Letters of Good Standing are provided to currently enrolled students in Pre-clinical Semesters (1-7). Students may request a Letter of Good standing using the MyRoss self-service tool which is available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross).

The Letter of Good Standing is prepared by the Office of the Registrar and provides the following information (as required):

- enrollment status;
- academic status;
- disciplinary status;
- number of credit hours completed; and
- class rank.

The cumulative grade point average is not provided in a Letter of Good Standing. For students who need their Cumulative GPA, they will need to request an official transcript online.

### **2.13.4 Letter of Intent**

Letters of Intent are provided to currently enrolled students in clinical Semesters (8-10). Students may request a Letter of Intent using the MyRoss self-service tool, which is available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross). These letters are prepared by the Office of the Registrar and provide the following information:

- matriculation status;
- enrollment status;
- designated clinical affiliate; and
- anticipated date of graduation.

Letters of Intent are automatically sent to the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners® within 10 months of a student's graduation date. If students require these letters for state licensure, these will have to be requested on MyRoss along with their transcript request. Each state will have different requirements so students will need verify state-specific requirements on that state licensure body's website. The cumulative GPA is not provided in a Letter of Intent. Students who need their cumulative GPA, will need to request an official transcript online.

### **2.13.5 Verification of Class Standing**

Each semester, at the end of Week 3, the Office of the Registrar is able to provide class standing the based on grades of the previous semester for students currently enrolled in Semesters 2-7. Requests for these are made through the MyRoss self-service tool.

### **2.13.6 Loan Form Verification**

Students requesting loan form verifications, may send the original documents to the Office of the Registrar located in our NJ Office: 485 US Highway 1, Building B, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Iselin, NJ 08830.

### **2.13.7 Enrollment Verification**

The enrollment verification is a printable student report available through the MyRoss self-service tool. This verification report is used as proof of enrollment to access varied services external to the University. These, and other services which may require enrollment verification include:

- Financial Aid;
- Insurance;
- Visa applications;
- Passport applications; and
- Jury duty confirmations.

Students may print an Enrollment Verification through the MyRoss web self-service tool. This letter will need to be notarized by the Office of the Registrar before use by the student.

### **2.13.8 Letter of Completion**

The Letter of Completion is provided to RUSVM Graduates. The purpose of this letter is to provide stakeholders with confirmation that students have completed all graduation requirements put forth by RUSVM. This letter will be used in anticipation of the successful completion of State licensure.

Students may request a Letter of Completion using the MyRoss self-service tool which is available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross).

The letters are prepared by the Office of the Registrar and provide the following information:

- Verification of matriculation;
- Confirmation of completion of academic program; and
- Confirmation and Date of Graduation.

The cumulative grade point average is not provided in a Letter of Completion but is available on the Academic transcript.

### **2.13.9 Requests for Transcript**

Students may request a transcript online using the MyRoss web self-service tool, which is available at [www.rossu.edu/myross](http://www.rossu.edu/myross), and there is no charge to request these. Transcripts are not released until all financial obligations to RUSVM have been met and any missing administrative documents have been received. Transcripts cannot be requested by telephone or email.

## **2.14 STUDENT FINANCE**

Students attending RUSVM may be eligible to apply for student loans to meet their direct and indirect educational expenses. Please see the RUSVM Financial Planning Guide on the RUSVM website at <http://www.rossu.edu/veterinary-school/students/financialinfo.cfm> for more detailed information.

At RUSVM, we know that tuition and loans are an important aspect of our students' education. We are committed to providing clear information to facilitate our students' financial responsibility. In this section of the Student Handbook, we describe possibilities for student loan deferment while you study. We also provide information about eligibility, how to pay your tuition and receive tuition refunds during withdrawals and approved absences.

Each year, RUSVM gives careful consideration to possible tuition and fees increases and alerts students of any increases prior to the September semester. At the time of registration and check-in, tuition and fees must be paid in full, unless the Director of Student Finance grants an exception based on one of the following:

- RUSVM has received documentary evidence, satisfactory to the Director of Student Finance, indicating that payment is guaranteed and that the full tuition and fees will be paid within 30 days from the beginning of the semester; or
- The Director of Student Finance has authorized delayed payment pursuant to a written and signed agreement that requires payment of the full tuition and fees not later than the beginning of the fifth week of the semester. In the event that the payment terms are not met, RUSVM reserves the right to annul registration in which case the student will not receive academic credit for that semester.

### **2.14.1 Student Loan Deferment Process**

If you have previously received student loans at other institutions, you may wish to defer repayment obligations while the student is attending RUSVM. RUSVM provides enrollment data to the National Student Clearinghouse which will be accessible to your loan lenders. There are certain cases (i.e., private loans) where you may need to complete a form from your lender and obtain a verification of enrollment from RUSVM. The enrollment verification letter is available at the MyRoss website, and should be mailed to your lender with the deferment form. Please contact the Office of Student Finance if you have questions. Please be advised that loans cannot be deferred during curriculum gap periods of more than 31 calendar days.

### **2.14.2 Financial Aid Eligibility When Repeating Coursework**

Veterinary students who fail any courses will be subject to the Pre-Clinical Sciences Satisfactory Academic Progress as stated in Section 2.7.14. Students who must repeat a course have the option to also retake any or all coursework from the same semester. Please be advised that students enrolled less than full-time (9 credits) will be subject to a prorated tuition schedule based on their course load.

In the repeating term, students taking 9.0 credits or more are full-time for enrollment, 4.5 to 8.5 credits are considered half-time for enrollment, and students taking 1-4.0 credits are considered less than half-time for enrollment. Students attending less than half-time will not be eligible for Title IV financial aid. Students are encouraged to contact their student finance representative to review their aid options when repeating any coursework.

### **2.14.3 Academic Warning and Academic Probation**

Satisfactory academic progress indicates that a student has met degree requirements to acceptable levels within a specified time period. Your SAP standing is important during academic evaluation and determination of eligibility for financial aid. Students who do not meet SAP requirements are subject to dismissal and/or loss of Title IV funding.

SAP is evaluated at the end of each semester. At the end of each semester, each student's academic progress is evaluated by RUSVM. This evaluation involves two metrics, one quantitative and one qualitative.

Please see Section 2.7.14 Pre-Clinical Sciences Satisfactory Academic Progress for complete information on Satisfactory Academic Progress and financial aid eligibility.

### **2.14.4 Tuition, Credit and Waiver Policies**

Full-time tuition is charged for students who are registered full-time (nine or more credits). Students repeating courses may have a prorated tuition based on the credits registered for the term. Tuition policies are administered in accordance with federal guidelines.

A student who is granted a LOA because of an emergency, will, upon returning from the leave of absence, receive credit for the portion of tuition charged during the interrupted semester toward the tuition of the repeat semester.

### **2.14.5 Tuition Refund Policy for Withdrawal**

A withdrawal occurs when a student's enrollment is permanently discontinued or, in some cases, even temporarily interrupted without an authorized LOA in accordance with the policies and procedures in this Student Handbook. The effective date of withdrawal is normally the date the student notifies the institution of the withdrawal or student's last academically related event (see below for further information on approved absence). An official withdrawal occurs when the student notifies the Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs and the Office of the Registrar in writing; an unofficial withdrawal occurs when the student does not give written notification.

For financial aid and tuition purposes an approved absence is treated as a temporary withdrawal. The effective date of withdrawal is normally the student's last academically related event. When a student withdraws, RUSVM assesses tuition based on the period he/she attended, and in correspondence with federal loan entitlement regulations. These are as follows:

- If a new student withdraws prior to the start of the first semester, no tuition charges are due;



however, acceptance deposits are forfeited. Notwithstanding the foregoing, students resident in the state of Missouri at the time they sign the admissions agreement with RUSVM will receive a refund of all monies paid if the student cancels the admissions agreement within three (3) days, not including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, of signing;

- If a continuing student withdraws prior to the start of a subsequent semester, no tuition charges are due; and
- If a student withdraws during the first 60 percent of a semester, tuition charges are directly pro-rated based on the portion of the semester that has elapsed. As semesters are normally sixteen (16) weeks in length, tuition is usually prorated for withdrawals during weeks one through nine.
- Per federal regulations for withdrawal during the first 60 percent of a semester, student loan entitlement is recalculated. RUSVM and the student are each proportionally responsible for returning “unearned” financial aid to the relevant lender(s);
- If a student withdraws after the first 60 percent (after completing the ninth week) of a semester, the full tuition; and
- Students applying for an LOA may be subject to the tuition refund policy based on the length of the LOA. See Section 2.14.6 Tuition Policy During Approved Absences for additional details.

## **2.14.6 Tuition Policy During Approved Absences**

Students applying for an LOA may be subject to the tuition refund policy based on the length of the LOA. An interruption of enrollment status that does not qualify as a leave of absence is considered a withdrawal as of the last date of academically related activity. An approved absence may be authorized in limited circumstances (Section 2.11.3 Absence from Pre-Clinical Program, and Section 2.11.4 Withdrawals and Deferrals).

For financial aid purposes and tuition adjustments, an approved absence is considered the same as a temporary withdrawal. Requesting and receiving an approved absence will have an impact on your obligation to repay tuition and student loans. For purposes of student loan deferment, an approved absence is the same as a withdrawal, and loans will go into repayment status as of the last academically related event. A student who begins an approved absence during a semester and sets a return date at the beginning of the next semester will be reported as “not enrolled” to all lenders. However, the student is not required to reapply for admission to RUSVM following such an approved absence.

## **2.14.7 Absence from Program**

Any student receiving student loans must also contact the Office of Student Finance. Additional information about financial consequences is provided in the Office of Student Finance’s publication Financial Planning Guide.

### **3 POSTGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Within the framework of the postgraduate studies program, RUSVM offers Master of Science (MSc) and Doctoral (PhD) degree programs in public health, global animal health, tropical animal health, conservation medicine, veterinary education research and other research areas supported by RUSVM and its partner institutions. The management of the postgraduate studies program and its regulations are guided by the frameworks set by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (United Kingdom).

Specifically RUSVM offers a Doctoral (PhD) Degree Program and both a MSc by Coursework in One Health (MSc One Health) online and a MSc by Research degree program. All programs are offered to international students and arrangements are in place for intercalated and integrated MSc by Research for individual DVM students.

“Postgraduate degrees” or “postgraduate degree programs” signifies ALL postgraduate programs offered by RUSVM. For the purpose of this Student Handbook, “postgraduate by research degrees” means the MSc by Research, PhD and PhD by Research Publications. RUSVM currently offers only one MSc by Coursework degree program, the MSc One Health degree program.

Postgraduate students (referred to as “Candidates”) appointed into postgraduate degree programs will embody an essential group of attributes that will be required to ensure the successful completion of the degree program, within a reasonable timeframe and ensure a competent career ready graduate. RUSVM, through research supervisors and teaching Faculty, provides clear, detailed and accessible information to candidates. Research supervisors and teaching faculty are directly involved in managing candidate progress and professional development.

Queries relating to these regulations can be sent the Postgraduate and Research Committee:

[postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn).

#### **3.1 ACCOMMODATIONS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students are advised that accommodations may not be available at facilities in St. Kitts outside of the RUSVM campus, including but not limited to housing and other public establishments such as restaurants.

Requests for accommodation should be made as soon as reasonably possible and preferably during the application process in order to allow for a research project to be defined that will suit individual requests. For existing RUSVM students, the student should make a request as soon as reasonably possible and, to the extent possible, at least thirty (30) days after the need for a request has arisen.

Students are advised that requests for accommodation are not automatically granted and cannot always be immediately implemented. It is the responsibility of the student seeking an accommodation to submit a timely request with such supporting documentation (procured solely by the student) as may be required. While RUSVM attempts to respond to requests quickly and efficiently, the processing of requests is an interactive one that is not within RUSVM's sole control. To a large extent, the process relies upon the request and any necessary response, including provision of relevant documents, from the student and/or the student's physician. Certain requests for accommodation may require that RUSVM procure assistive technology or other resources, which may not be readily available in St. Kitts. Accordingly, students are encouraged to give RUSVM as much advanced notice as possible of the student's request for an accommodation. Requests that are not submitted in a timely manner or requests not accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation may impede RUSVM's ability to review requests for accommodation.

To request an accommodation, applicants and candidates must email the Postgraduate and Research Administrator ([postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn)) who will liaise with the relevant departments of RUSVM and/or DeVry Education Group, as appropriate.

Any accommodation granted will be reasonable and appropriate to the circumstances, allowing equal opportunity for qualified students with disabilities, and will not infringe on the essential requirements of, or fundamentally alter, the postgraduate program of RUSVM.

Students who believe they have been denied a reasonable accommodation, or who otherwise believe they have been unlawfully discriminated against based on a disability, may file a formal complaint pursuant to the policy set forth in Section 1.8 Complaints Concerning Student Conduct and Disciplinary Proceedings.

## **3.2 POSTGRADUATE DEGREE REGULATIONS**

The Degree Regulations and Programs of Study provide information on the degree programs offered by RUSVM, and set out the regulatory framework by which these are governed.

### **3.2.1 Introduction**

This document contains the Degree Regulations for all categories of postgraduate degrees at RUSVM. Postgraduate candidates for the degrees of MSc by Research and PhD should also refer to the Postgraduate Research Assessment regulations (Section 3.4.9) while candidates on the MSc One Health should also refer to the MSc by Coursework in One Health Degree Program Regulations Section 3.3.

Postgraduate degrees are guided by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education ([www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)).

Authority to award postgraduate degrees is derived from the St. Christopher and Nevis Accreditation Board (<http://ab.gov.kn/>).

### **3.2.2 Powers of Delegation**

The Dean has the authority to admit, examine and dismiss candidates and to grant permissions, concessions (including fee waivers) and exemptions. This authority is delegated by the Dean to the Director of Postgraduate Studies, as co-Chair of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

#### **3.2.2.1 *Postgraduate and Research Committee***

All postgraduate degree programs are the responsibility of the Postgraduate and Research Committee. The Postgraduate and Research Committee will consider and ratify the recommendation of the Internal and External Examiners appointed to examine a candidate for the award of a postgraduate degree.

##### **3.2.2.1.1 *Director of Postgraduate Studies***

The postgraduate programs are headed by the Director of Postgraduate Studies, who is responsible for the overall direction, conduct, governance, organization and assurance of quality in the programs. This officer acts as the liaison between program staff and candidates, and is the joint-convenor of the Postgraduate and Research Committee. The Director of Postgraduate Studies is also responsible for recommending applicants to the RUSVM Dean for admission and for monitoring the suitability of candidate projects and supervisors.

##### **3.2.2.1.2 *Membership of the Postgraduate and Research Committee***

The Postgraduate and Research Committee consists of senior members of the RUSVM faculty, senior staff who will play a role in the training of candidates, a postgraduate candidate, and the academic administration, and is convened jointly by the Director of Postgraduate Studies and the Associate Dean, Research.

- Director of Postgraduate Studies (Co-Chair)
- Associate Dean, Research (Co-Chair)
- Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning
- Research Center Directors
- Two members of faculty
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee representative
- Institutional Research Board representative
- Senior scientist
- Environmental Health and Safety Representative
- Postgraduate Candidate representative (non-voting)
- Research and Postgraduate administrators

Committee membership should be reassessed every two (2) years and continuity of membership

should be maintained (i.e. whenever possible no more than one-third of the membership rotates off in any given year). The Postgraduate Candidate representative will serve for one (1) calendar year.

#### **3.2.2.1.3      *Responsibilities of the Postgraduate and Research Committee***

The responsibilities of the Postgraduate and Research Committee include:

- approving the format of assessments;
- the security of and arrangements for assessments, examining and marking assessed work; and processing and storing marks and grades;
- the quality and standards of marking;
- ensuring all examiners are aware of their responsibilities; and
- accurate recording, and reporting of decisions.

### **3.2.3 Selection and Admission**

RUSVM will ensure that the selection and admission procedures are inclusive, clear, easily accessible, consistently applied and equitable.

#### **3.2.3.1      *Initial Inquiry***

This can be achieved by:

- Having a process whereby all potential candidates who make an inquiry will have access to clear, detailed, accurate and easily accessible information to allow potential applicants to make informed choices at the point of initial inquiry; or
- Candidates being aware of special provisions of the program including requirements for appropriate vaccination, biosafety training and any other condition relevant to their chosen study.

#### **3.2.3.2      *Selection, Approval and Offer***

All applications for admission to all postgraduate degree programs will be assessed by appropriately qualified staff and clear processes exist to identify the resources and supervisory requirements of the applicant, should he/she be admitted to the program. For all applicants, an interview of shortlisted candidates will be carried out. If face-to-face interviews are not possible, Skype™ or video-conference interviews will be conducted.

The Director of Postgraduate Studies, on behalf of the Postgraduate and Research Committee, will make the decision to extend a formal offer to postgraduate applicants. The offer, which will be submitted to the Dean for final approval, will highlight the match between the candidate's project and the supervisors and resources necessary for a timely completion of a high-quality postgraduate degree program. Applicants with borderline entry requirements or undergraduate qualifications in a non-scientific discipline will be referred to the Postgraduate and Research Committee, for approval.

For the MSc One Health degree program, applications will be pre-screened by the Postgraduate and Research Administrator against criteria defined by the program coordinator and the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Selected candidates and borderline cases will be passed on to the program

coordinator and the Director of Postgraduate Studies who will make the final decision as to the offer of admissions and the conditions of those offers. A list of candidates will be presented to the Postgraduate and Research Committee prior to the program commencement annually.

Offers of admissions may be made on a conditional basis. In such cases, the offer will be made final, following receipt of evidence from the offer holder that all the conditions of the offer have been fulfilled.

### **3.2.3.3      *English Proficiency***

Unless English is the first language, candidates must demonstrate English language proficiency. RUSVM will accept the results from several secure English language tests (SELT). SELT tests must have been successfully completed no earlier than two years before the start date of the program for which candidates are seeking admission. RUSVM accepts the results from one certificate only: multiple certificates from two or more tests each partially meeting requirements will not be accepted. Each certificate received will be checked against on-line databases of scores maintained by the SELT testers (including IELTS and TOEFL).

### **3.2.3.4      *Collaborative Research Support***

All joint research projects and jointly awarded degrees (sometimes referred to as co-tutelles) will have formal agreements that outline the responsibilities of all parties. The entering candidate will be provided with a detailed Project Plan.

#### **3.2.3.4.1 *Joint-PhDs***

RUSVM offers a small number of PhD degree programs awarded jointly with partner institutions, selected on the basis of existing academic and research collaborations. As for all RUSVM's postgraduate degree programs, Title IV U.S. federal loans are not available for these degree programs (Cf. 3.2.5.5 Admission, Enrollment and Payment of Fees).

Joint-PhD are designed to enable the student to carry out a research project and submit a related thesis for examination in accordance with the two partner institutions' regulations governing postgraduate study in fulfilment of the requirements of a PhD degree from two partner institutions.

Students registered for a joint-PhD degree program must have received admission from both partner institutions and all application procedures remain as per the individual institutions' rules and regulations. Only one degree is awarded and the jointly awarded degree is indicate in a single diploma with the logos of both institutions. A lead institution is always nominated and supervisors from RUSVM and the partner institution are appointed. The student will be expected to spend periods of time in each institution according to a schedule defined in a student-specific joint-PhD agreement. Students must fulfil all the academic requirements of both institutions. Student complaints will be handled following the procedures of the lead institution. Specific academic and administrative conditions applicable to the jointly-awarded PhD degree program will be specified in the agreement and will include:

- The name of the lead institution

- The research project
- Funding arrangements, including the student stipend if one is provided
- Expected periods of time at each institution
- Assessment and Examinations
- Intellectual Property

### **3.2.3.5 *Faculty seeking to enroll in postgraduate programs***

It is recognized that RUSVM Faculty at any one time, are at different stages of their careers, have different career objectives, have different research objectives and contribute to RUSVM in a variety of ways. RUSVM Faculty seeking to enroll in a postgraduate degree program must be fully aware of the demanding and challenging nature of the program. Those wishing to enroll in full time study will be required to transfer to a candidate stipend rather than remain on a faculty salary. A maximum period will be nominated for the candidature. Minimum requirements for teaching and administration will be determined and documented in consultation with the head of his/her department and Dean. All research work will be reported in a timely and effective manner in both scholarly journals and dissertation. Regular reviews will be conducted by the Postgraduate and Research Committee to ensure the viability of the project.

### **3.2.4 Application for Registration as Postgraduate Candidates**

Application may be made for registration in one of the following categories with the approval of the Dean:

- As a candidate for a Master of Science Degree (MSc) degree:
  - By Coursework in One Health; or
  - By Research.
- As a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree:
  - PhD; or
  - PhD by Research Publications.

### **3.2.5 Registration**

Members of RUSVM staff or faculty holding an appointment under the auspices of RUSVM may only be registered for part-time study.

A candidate may not repeat a semester of study if his/her progress has been unsatisfactory. Only for credit-based degree programs (currently limited to the MSc One Health) may the student be allowed to repeat a semester, if authorized by the Director of Postgraduate Studies. For research degree programs (non-credit based) degree programs (MSc By Research, PhD and PhD by Research Publications), extensions to the prescribed period of study may be granted by the Postgraduate and Research Committee.



### **3.2.5.1      *Application and Registration of Postgraduate Candidates***

Application for registration as a postgraduate candidate must be formally submitted on an RUSVM Application form.

All applicants must be graduates of RUSVM or graduates of another approved higher education institution, or must hold academic or professional qualifications, or their equivalent, accepted by the Postgraduate and Research Committee as equivalent. The minimum qualification for admission to a postgraduate degree program is a Bachelor's degree or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

### **3.2.5.2      *Conditions of Registration***

RUSVM may impose appropriate conditions before agreeing to register an applicant. These conditions may include, but are not limited to:

- English language courses and test scores;
- Study in any special field pertinent to the work that will be carried out;
- Examinations, written, practical or oral;
- The preparation of a critical survey of relevant literature;
- The extension of the normal minimum period of study; or
- Restrictions on authorized leave of absence from RUSVM.

In the case of candidates registered for part-time study, candidates jointly-supervised at partner institutions and candidates conducting research off-site, RUSVM will normally impose such conditions as to ensure adequate academic contact between the candidate and the supervisors.

### **3.2.5.3      *Integrated and Intercalated DVM/MSc by Research***

DVM students wishing to undertake an MSc by Research degree program may do so as:

- An integrated DVM/MSc by Research: for this degree program, students must commence their MSc by Research in the same semester as their DVM program. No student who has completed 1 or more semesters of the DVM program will be allowed to register as an integrated DVM/MSc by Research student; or
- An intercalated DVM/MSc by Research: for this degree program, DVM students, with the permission of the Associate Dean, Students, may take time off the DVM program to undertake a 3-semester MSc by Research. Only students having completed at least one semester and students currently in semesters 1-5 will be considered as to not interfere with the Clinical Placement process. DVM students applying for an intercalated MSc by Research degree program must be in good standing in their DVM program and have achieved a suitably satisfactory grades (GPA of 3.0 or over) before being admitted onto the MSc by Research degree program.

### **3.2.5.4      *Conflicting Studies***

With the exception of those to whom special permission has been granted by the Postgraduate and



Research Committee to pursue studies with a view to obtaining a professional qualification, candidates must not, during the period of their registration, take courses or pursue studies in this or in any other institution with a view to obtaining any degree, diploma or professional qualification other than the one for which they are registered at RUSVM.

Candidates who have been registered for a postgraduate degree immediately prior to their proposed period of study at RUSVM may be admitted on the assumption that all written work for that postgraduate degree will be submitted for examination before the start of the semester of entry to the RUSVM degree program. Candidates admitted on this basis who do not provide evidence of such completion by the end of Week 4 of Semester 1 will be formally withdrawn from their studies at RUSVM.

No candidate may be awarded more than one qualification for the same work. In the case of jointly-awarded postgraduate degrees (such as joint-PhDs), the award may be made jointly by both institutions.

### **3.2.5.5      *Admission, Enrollment and Payment of Fees***

**RUSVM's postgraduate degree program are NOT eligible for Title IV U.S. Federal Loans.**

Candidates must enroll at the beginning of their study period by accepting their offer letter and thereafter on their attendance anniversary each year of their registration by emailing [postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn) and indicating any change of personal information. Candidates Must on the occasion of each enrollment pay the tuition and fees due for enrollment period. For Degree programs longer than one year, this must be conducted until graduation. Annual registration as a candidate for a particular degree will depend on satisfactory progress and on meeting any conditions specified at the time of admission or subsequently.

DVM students registering onto the Integrated and Intercalated DVM/MSc by Research degree programs will follow the same process. Due to Title IV, DVM students must withdraw from the DVM program as follows:

- For the intercalated option: prior to commencement of the 3-semester MSc by Research degree program; or
- For the integrated option: prior to the commencement of the research-only semester.

Withdrawal from the DVM program to complete dedicated portion of the MSc by Research program as highlighted above, may impact on deferment of US Federal loans (Title IV) and students should consult their Financial Aid officer regarding the process prior to commencement of the intercalated or the integrated MSc by Research.

Re-admission onto the DVM program following completion of the semester(s) dedicated to the MSc by Research will be through an expedited process through the Assistant Director of Admissions and the

Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs. Students must demonstrate that they are in good standing in their MSc by Research before being re-admitted onto the DVM program. This translates as:

- For the Intercalated option, as having completed their Final Review and Pre-Intention to Submit satisfactory as reported by their progress monitoring committee; or
- For the Integrated option, as having successfully completed their Confirmation of Candidature and as having demonstrated adequate engagement in their research-only semester as established by their lead supervisors.

Students registered in the postgraduate programs will not be reported to the National Student Clearinghouse for deferral of US Federal Student Loan Programs. Students are not considered enrolled in a Title IV eligible program and thus do not meet the qualifications for an “in-school deferment”, but may request forbearance. Students should check with their private loan lenders in seeking deferments and/or forbearances.

Billing may be per calendar year with pre-determined payment dates per semester period. If fees are not paid within one month of the effective date of admission, or of the letter of admission, whichever shall be the later, and annually thereafter within one month of the due date, then registration may lapse. Students have the right to request tuition be paid in an installment plan. Registration will be restored if payment of a late fee and fees due is made within three months of the due date; thereafter it will be restored only with the express consent of the Dean. For Integrated and Intercalated DVM/MSc by Research, billing for the MSc by Research and the DVM will be posted separately, due to ineligibility of the postgraduate programs for US. Federal Loans (Title IV).

Alteration in the effective date of admission may be made only with the permission of the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

A candidate may not repeat a semester of study if his/her progress has been unsatisfactory. Extensions to the prescribed period of study may be granted by the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

For students that are withdrawn, administratively withdrawn, dismissed, suspended, students may be entitled to a tuition refund. Students are refunded on a semester basis based on number of months enrolled in the program. Stipends are exempt from the tuition fee policy.

Below is a breakdown of withdrawal based tuition credits. Please note that health insurance fees will not be adjusted. Student association fees, if relevant, will not be refunded.

- Month 1: 75% tuition adjustment
- Month 2: 50% tuition adjustment
- Month 3: 25% tuition adjustment
- Month 4: No adjustment

#### **3.2.5.6        *Cancellation Policy***

If an applicant decides to withdraw his/her application prior to decision, the applicant must email the Research and Postgraduate Administrator (postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn) with that request. The Administrator will then deactivate the application.

The state of Missouri provides for a period during which admissions agreements with RUSVM may be cancelled by the candidate with refund of all monies paid. This cancellation period shall not be less than (3) days, not including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

### **3.3 MASTER OF SCIENCE BY COURSEWORK IN ONE HEALTH (MSc ONE HEALTH) DEGREE PROGRAM REGULATIONS**

#### **3.3.1 Prescribed Period of Study**

The period of study is one (1) year/three (3) semesters, full-time. This period may not be reduced, and may be extended only in exceptional circumstances. No candidate will be admitted to a postgraduate degree program after the commencement date without the express permission of the Dean acting on the advice of the Program Director.

The MSc One Health degree program may be studied on a part-time basis. The period of study for the MSc One Health degree program studied on a part-time continuous basis will be a maximum of three (3) years/nine (9) semesters.

Registration will begin in September, unless RUSVM decides to start course delivery at another time of the year.

##### **3.3.1.1 *Program of Study***

Requirements for progression throughout the MSc One Health degree program are shown in the relevant program curriculum. All programs of study are subject to regulations which have been approved by the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

The MSc One Health degree program has defined parameters, such as:

- The degree to which it leads;
- The planned duration and mode of study of the program;
- The aims and learning outcomes of the program;
- The curriculum and structure of the program of study; and
- The regulations on the assessment of candidates.

##### **3.3.1.2 *Part-time study***

The MSc One Health degree program may be pursued by part-time study on a continuous basis.

##### **3.3.1.3 *Admission and Registration***

All registered candidates for the MSc One Health degree program must also satisfy regulations included in Section 3.2 Postgraduate Regulations.

#### **3.3.1.4 Cancellation of Courses**

RUSVM operates under a lockstep curriculum. RUSVM's curriculum is designed so classes are meant to be taken in a specific order, to bolster students' knowledge and skills incrementally. As such, the general policy at RUSVM is that it may not cancel postgraduate courses, except elective courses.

#### **3.3.1.5 New Student Welcome Packet Materials**

Once accepted to RUSVM, candidates receive information pertaining to access to online classes, reading materials, course calendar and the residential (on-island) component.

#### **3.3.1.6 Authorized Leave of Absence, Authorized Interruption of Study or Withdrawal**

Authorized leave of absence is not normally permitted, but may be granted on special application to the Director of Postgraduate Studies by the candidate's Principal Supervisor or the candidate, as appropriate.

Registration may be interrupted by RUSVM, if good cause is shown, for not more than two years. No fees are payable during any full year in which authorized interruption of study has been continuous.

On the recommendation of the Director of Postgraduate Studies and Dean, and after seeking the views of the candidate, the Postgraduate and Research Committee may withdraw a candidate's studies. In the event that the candidate's registration is withdrawn it is within the Postgraduate and Research Committee's discretion to recommend to the Dean that the candidate be awarded a degree in the topic area of the Program of Study if a sufficient standard has been reached in the prescribed courses.

The candidate may appeal the withdrawal of his/her degree by written appeal to the Director of Postgraduate Studies who will bring it to the Academic Review Committee, a standing committee of RUSVM. The Academic Review Committee will make a recommendation to the Dean.

#### **3.3.1.7 Examination**

Regulations relating to examination and assessment (including progression and awards) are detailed in the syllabus.

An oral examination on the mini-dissertation may be required. Candidates, in addition to being examined on course work, will be required to submit their thesis for examination by a date to be announced. Submission dates for all assessed work, including the thesis, will be specified in the relevant Syllabi. Extension may be granted by the Postgraduate and Research Studies Committee in exceptional circumstances only. The submission of independent work may consist of a thesis. (Two word-processed paper copies of each thesis must be submitted).

Coursework should be completed as per the timetable defined in the syllabus. For those degrees

studied on a part-time continuous basis, coursework should be completed within 2 years of first registration before progression to the thesis. The assignment of a research project will take place before 31 March in the year in which it is to be examined, except for programs with a commencement date other than September of the preceding year, in which case the date will be adjusted as appropriate.

Candidates will pursue their thesis studies under the direction of RUSVM supervisors nominated by the Dean and appointed by the Postgraduate and Research Studies Committee. The Postgraduate and Research Studies Committee may appoint additional external supervisors.

The degrees may be awarded with distinction (for overall grades of 80 percent or above). The grounds for award of the MSc One Health degree are:

- The certified completion of research training plus other designated projects and/or assignments and/or course work, and the completion of a thesis, called the mini- dissertation. The thesis may comprise the total of the assessed material, or a part only. Assessment of the various elements may be made separately or together at the end of the MSc One Health degree program;
- The completion of any required research training and demonstration by the presentation of work specified above that he/she has acquired an advanced level of knowledge and understanding in the field of study and is capable of undertaking independent research;
- The portfolio of projects or dissertation submitted should comprise either a satisfactory record of research undertaken by the candidate, or a satisfactory critical survey of knowledge in the field of study, or both, combined with a satisfactory plan for a more advanced research project, and show competence in the appropriate method of research and an adequate knowledge of the field of study. The work must be satisfactory in its literary presentation and include adequate references; and
- In order to confer the degree, students must have satisfied all academic and financial obligations to the RUSVM. RUSVM reserves the right to hold issuance of the diploma if the student has outstanding obligations to RUSVM.

### **3.3.1.8      *Program Description***

The MSc One Health degree program is research-informed, delivered primarily online. Candidates will benefit from the expertise of world-renowned experts. The program includes residential and online taught components as well as a research project leading to the presentation of a thesis.

The MSc One Health is designed to equip veterinarians, animal scientists, medical and biological scientists with an in-depth understanding of the principles of, and issues associated with, One Health. RUSVM is committed to a One Health approach to a sectoral and multidisciplinary research aimed at sustainably reducing the burden of zoonoses. Zoonoses and other diseases affecting livestock production and health have serious impacts on the economic growth, health and food security and alleviation of poverty in tropical and resource constrained countries. Candidates will also have the opportunity to explore the complex interplay of altered environments and infectious diseases as an increasing threat to agriculture, public health and endangered/threatened species, on a global basis. This degree program is delivered in collaboration with DeVry University's Keller Graduate School of Management (part of the DeVry Education Group).

MSc One Health candidates must abide by the policies and regulations of DeVry University when enrolled in courses delivered by the DeVry University's Keller Graduate School of Management. If conducting their research project at another academic institution or, public or private sector organizations, candidates will be expected to follow the rules and regulations of their host institutions.

### **3.3.1.9      *Learning Outcomes***

The MSc One Health degree program is designed to provide the skills and preparation needed for careers in a broad range of environments. The flexible program of study has particular strengths in:

- tropical animal health and diseases;
- the intersection of animal health and human health;
- epidemiology;
- conservation medicine;
- food safety;
- animal health program management;
- animal disease investigation;
- research and diagnostic methods;
- the interface between domestic animals and wildlife; and
- delivery of veterinary services.

On completion of the MSc One Health degree program, the candidates will have gained knowledge, research skills and research experience in topics relevant to the broad field of One Health. The program provides graduates the background and experience to assess, investigate and manage animal health and zoonotic disease risks, to design and execute targeted research in animal health, and to manage veterinary intervention in the control and prevention of animal disease. Within the degree program the candidates will have had the opportunity to focus on an area of interest, such as area disease control, vector borne diseases, zoonotic infections or conservation medicine.

Candidates will acquire and enhance intellectual skills in scientific assessment and research methodology, as well as practical skills in communication, organization and scientific writing.

### **3.3.1.10      *Delivery***

The program of study is characterized by a well-designed set of core courses and a flexible choice of elective courses to meet the demands of the field and the goals of the students. The taught component will be instructed by distance learning via eCollege®, RUSVM's Virtual Learning Environment. Candidates will be taught by RUSVM faculty and specialist modules may be delivered by RUSVM's partner institutions.

The MSc One Health requires forty-one (41) credits, obtained through coursework and a project, leading to the submission of a thesis. Candidates are required to undertake specified core courses

amounting to twenty-three (23) credits. The research project may be carried out in St. Kitts and Nevis or in other locations, as appropriate, under the supervision/co-supervision of a RUSVM faculty member. The research component may be desk-based, lab-based or through fieldwork and will result in the submission of a thesis. A short residential (max. one (1) week) component will allow the candidate cohort to share their perspective and dissertation work with the RUSVM research community.

### **3.3.1.11      *Assessment***

Assessment will be conducted through traditional and novel methods suited to an online delivery mode and will include, for example, essays, critical review of peer-reviewed articles, online tests and quizzes, blog writing, research proposal writing, research/fieldwork journal development, group discussions, group project work and social media interactions. Detailed information for each course, part of the degree program, will be available in the syllabi.

Assessment of the dissertation stage will be conducted on a portfolio of projects or dissertation submitted. It should comprise either a satisfactory record of research undertaken by the candidate, or a satisfactory critical survey of knowledge in the field of study, or both, combined with a satisfactory plan for a more advanced research project, and show competence in the appropriate method of research and an adequate knowledge of the field of study. The work must be satisfactory in its literary presentation and include adequate references.

The assessed work, including the dissertation, should be equivalent to, but not exceeding, 30,000 words. The thesis must be submitted within a maximum of three (3) months after the completion of the prescribed program of study unless an extension is granted by the Director of Postgraduate Studies.

Candidates must provide evidence that their work has been checked through an anti-plagiarism software approved by RUSVM, such as Turnitin®.

### **3.3.1.12      *Grading***

For MSc One Health, the grading system is as follows:

Grade	Grade Range
A =	93% or higher
A- =	90% to 92.9%
B+ =	87% to 89.9%
B =	83% to 86.9%
B- =	80% to 82.9%
C+ =	77% to 79.9%
C =	73% to 76.9%
C- =	70% to 72.9%



D+ =	67% to 69.9%
D =	63% to 66.9%
D- =	60% to 62.9%
F =	Below 60%

Candidates are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Examinations;
- Completion of assignments, including practical activities;
- Class and threaded discussion participation;
- Academic honesty and professional demeanor; and
- Professionalism and the ability to effectively work with others in a team environment.

### **3.3.1.13 Attendance**

Attendance is directly tied to academic performance; therefore, regular attendance is required. Instructors may choose to include class attendance and/or participation as criteria for computing student grades. Thus, students who do not attend class regularly risk earning lower or failing grades. Absenteeism may also result in warning, advising or dismissal. Students may be dismissed (withdrawn) from RUSVM.

Attendance is taken throughout the session (or semester). Attendance is recorded daily based on each academic event to ensure the last date of attendance is available for the purpose of determining the timeframe of attendance.

Understanding the attendance policy is especially important for candidates, because it is directly tied to academic performance and is recorded daily throughout the session.

Students who do not complete any of the academic requirements during the first two weeks of the session are dismissed for non-attendance. Students dismissed from all courses because of non-attendance should note that they will be withdrawn for the entire degree program.

Grading criteria include requirements for class participation in online discussions and in synchronously- delivered lectures and/or webinars and the extent to which work missed due to non-participation can be made up.

Students who anticipate missing one or more synchronous classes/tutorials/webinars should contact their instructor as soon as possible and should seek academic advice.

Students in an online course who anticipate missing more than a seven-consecutive-calendar-day period of online class attendance should contact their instructor as soon as possible and should seek academic advice. Online class attendance includes submitting class assignments, participating in threaded discussions, completing quizzes and exams, completing tutorials and participating in

computer-assisted instruction.

#### **3.3.1.14 Withdrawals**

Due to the structure of curriculum, students may not withdraw from an individual course during the session, and withdrawals can only be for the whole degree program. Withdrawal inquiries should be made to the degree Program Coordinator, Dr. Fortune Sithole ([fsithole@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:fsithole@rossvet.edu.kn)), who is responsible for the academic overview of the program. Students who do not formally withdraw from the program and subsequently receive a failing grade due to lack of participation may be administratively withdrawn, resulting in a Withdrawal from the degree program.

#### **3.3.1.15 Threaded Discussions**

Key to the learning process in an online educational environment is the interactions among students, the interaction between faculty and students, and the collaboration in learning that results from these interactions. In the MSc One Health degree program, the primary way this is accomplished is through the use of threaded discussions.

Threaded discussions are critical to the success of a top-quality online course, because they mirror the discussions that take place in a site-based classroom. Online discussions take place asynchronously with each student posting or commenting by logging on to the class at different times. Students initiate discussions, ask questions, react to other students, respond to ideas shared by others in the class, and become more creative in their own learning process. This interaction not only allows students to grow cognitively but collegially. Threaded discussions provide for the formation of learning communities, communities where knowledge is imparted and meaning is co-created, thereby setting the stage for the accomplishment of learning outcomes.

To gain maximum benefit from threaded discussions and to ensure a common understanding of student and faculty expectations, the following policies, standards, and guidelines apply:

- Students are expected to log on and participate in weekly threaded discussion activity at least every other day. In the majority of courses, participation at least every other day is necessary if students are to meaningfully interact on discussion issues presented in class. In other courses, it is necessary for students to complete readings and problem assignments prior to meaningful participation and thus the "every other day" requirement may be appropriately interpreted as three days per week;
- Students are expected to fully participate in the discussion. This means that, in addition to posting a response to the thread topics presented, students are expected to respond to comments and questions from the instructor and/or other students;
- Courses will include anywhere from one to three threaded discussion topics per week plus a wrap-up thread. The number of posts per thread topic may vary with the type of course (qualitative vs. quantitative in nature) and the percentage weight given to the threaded discussions in calculating the final course grade. The number of posts per thread topic and the percentage weight will be left up to the discretion of the faculty members;

- Quality indicators for threaded discussion posts will be detailed out in the course syllabi under the grading policy of the threaded discussions;
- A threaded discussion is a conversation and not a bulletin board or “chat room”. The instructor is expected to facilitate discussions between student and instructor, student and student, and groups of students. The role of the instructor is not to answer every comment or question but to frame issues and extend the discussions through leading and directed questions;
- Threaded discussions give students the opportunity to accomplish one of the MSc One Health degree program’s objectives: to strengthen students’ ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Keeping this educational objective in mind, both students and instructors are expected to post “threads” that are well thought out, well written, and apply the principles of effective communication;
- Students and instructors are expected to conduct themselves professionally when interacting with one another in threaded discussions. To this end, they are expected to follow the “Net Etiquette” guidelines that can be found on eCollege® in the Policies section of all online courses;
- Participation in the threaded discussions each week is an important part of the learning process. However, sometimes unavoidable circumstances make that participation impossible. In those cases, RUSVM has a process to allow students to make up participation points for a week of threaded participation by writing a 4-5 page paper. This paper must summarize the discussions missed, and add material to show mastery of the topics discussed, integrating that mastery with the Course Outcomes for the week; and
- If candidate cannot meet the minimum threaded discussion requirements for any given week, the course instructor should be contacted as soon as possible. The instructor will forward the request to the Program Coordinator and the Director of Postgraduate Studies. The administration will review the request, and may make accommodations to students under the following circumstances:
  - In the event that the area in which a student resides experiences an extended;
  - power outage due to a natural disaster (hurricane, flood, storm, etc.);
  - A student is on active military duty and cannot complete coursework; or
  - A student has a verifiable medical or other personal emergency.

If students have any questions or need further clarification of the above, they should contact the Postgraduate and Research administrator at [postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn](mailto:postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn).

### **3.3.1.16 Turnitin**

In accordance with our Code of Conduct (Section 1.6), candidates are required to submit their work through an anti-plagiarism software through DropBox submission. Candidates must provide evidence that their work has been checked through an anti-plagiarism software approved by RUSVM, such as Turnitin.

### **3.3.1.17 Late assignments**

The late assignments procedure is outlined in the syllabus of the MSc by Coursework in One Health.



## **3.4 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAM REGULATIONS**

### **3.4.1 Introduction**

This section applies to the MSc by Research, PhD, and PhD by Research Publications degree programs. Our Faculty is actively engaged in research and will provide candidates, with new tools and ways of thinking that lead to innovation. Candidates will be equipped with transferable research skills necessary to pursue a wide selection of careers in academia, industry, business or elsewhere. As postgraduate researchers, candidates will focus on a topic specific to one of the four RUSVM Research Centers and be supervised by experienced faculty members. Candidate students will be expected to show they can deliver and manage their research project and advance knowledge within their chosen discipline.

#### **3.4.1.1 *Matching needs, resources and supervision***

Having appropriate policy and procedures in place to ensure admission to a postgraduate research degree program only occurs where there is an appropriate fit between the applicant, the research environment and available resources and supervision capacity.

The entering candidate will be provided with:

- A suitable supervisory team;
- Appropriate research and research training infrastructure; and
- Adequate resources for the proposed project agreed to with the supervisory team and the Postgraduate and Research Committee and aligned with RUSVM's Strategic Plan.

### **3.4.2 Supervision of and Expectations**

RUSVM ensures that:

- Supervisors are adequately qualified to supervise postgraduate candidates at the qualification level the candidates are registered for;
- There is a sufficient number of experienced supervisors to support all candidates for the duration of their candidature; and
- Research supervision is formally and transparently recognized in workloads and RUSVM monitors the number of candidates that a member of faculty should supervise at any one time.

All supervisors will have:

- A degree at the level they are supervising or higher;
- The skills and experience relevant to supervising the project in the stated area;
- Ongoing involvement in developing and maintaining knowledge and expertise in the research degree supervision; and

- An understanding of RUSVM's policies and procedures in relation to supervision and in particular their respective role, expectation and requirement of the degree.

Candidates should understand that:

- They are expected to be proactive and self-directed in all aspects of their study;
- They need to make independent and creative use of library and all other available resources;
- They need to embrace online learning opportunities;
- They need to make full use of laboratory facilities;
- They need to take full advantage of their information sources, including research faculty and facilities;
- They need to adopt work practices and working hours that facilitate effective communication with the appointed supervisors;
- Annual re-registration will depend on satisfactory progress and on meeting any conditions specified at the time of admission or subsequently;
- Authorized leave of absence is not normally permitted but may be granted on special application to the Postgraduate and Research Committee by the candidate's Principal Supervisor. Registration may be interrupted, if good cause is shown, for not more than twelve months. No fees are payable during the period of interrupted study; and
- They are required to understand the reference style of their thesis and the use of referencing tools such as EndNote®.

Each candidate will work under the guidance of at least two supervisors appointed by RUSVM, one of whom will be appointed as the lead supervisor (Principal Supervisor).

The supervisors must be either: (a) salaried members of the academic faculty of RUSVM; (b) a member of staff employed by RUSVM, not being one of the academic faculty, who has appropriate expertise in research; or (c) an honorary/adjunct member of faculty. The nomination of individuals in categories (b) or (c) to act as a Principal Supervisor must be specifically approved by the RUSVM Postgraduate and Research Committee. In appropriate cases one or more other supervisor(s) (external supervisors), who need not be members of the faculty of the RUSVM, may be appointed by the RUSVM Postgraduate and Research Committee.

Each candidate is assigned a Progress Monitoring Committee. Progress Monitoring Committees are comprised of RUSVM supervisors, external supervisors (if applicable) and a member of RUSVM faculty who is not directly involved in the candidate's research project. The role of the Progress Monitoring Committee is to assess whether the candidate has made satisfactory progress as per the RUSVM Postgraduate Assessment Regulations. The Progress Monitoring Committee is chaired by one of its members (but not the Principal Supervisor).

All candidates, including those studying on a part-time basis and those registered as continuing candidates, must report in person to their supervisors when required and at least twice in each four month period. Candidates who are absent from the RUSVM must report to their supervisors via other

communication means such as video-/teleconference/Skype or in writing.

### **3.4.3 Progress Monitoring**

Postgraduate research degree programs are not credit-based and are assessed through the submission of a final thesis (and, for PhD and PhD by Research Publications candidates, an oral examination). However, to assist with the satisfactory progress of candidates, RUSVM undertakes a rigorous progress monitoring management of postgraduate candidates at defined milestones.

### **3.4.4 Candidate Support**

RUSVM ensures that candidates have access to required resources which enable timely completion of a quality degree including appropriate physical, financial, administrative, academic, and counseling and disability support services. RUSVM is committed to providing an environment for research candidates that is engaging, culturally sensitive, locally and globally relevant and supports diversity.

#### **3.4.4.1 *Resources and Infrastructure***

Candidates are provided with appropriate resources such as, but not limited to: space (including virtual classrooms), equipment, library, internet access and any other support necessary to conduct their research for the life of their project.

### **3.4.5 Pastoral Care**

At the point of registration, candidates are made aware of the availability of personal and pastoral support services necessary for the promotion of health and wellbeing.

### **3.4.6 General Requirements**

#### **3.4.6.1 *Residence other than in St. Kitts***

Postgraduate research degree program candidates, with the written approval of the Dean or the Director of Postgraduate Studies, may be absent in order to carry out fieldwork and necessary academic research for periods. Candidates must be resident in St. Kitts for a minimum period as defined in Section 3.4.6.2 Reduction in Residence Requirements so that regular and frequent contact is maintained. Authorized leave of absence, for reasons other than carrying out fieldwork, in the first semester of study or for a longer period than three (3) semesters may only be granted, in exceptional circumstances, by the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

#### **3.4.6.2 *Reduction in Residence Requirements***

PhD and MSc by Research degree program candidates who are not resident in St. Kitts may be registered on the basis that: (a) they spend a total period of not less than the equivalent of one quarter of the prescribed period of study at RUSVM over the period of study; (b) there is demonstrable evidence of suitable facilities where they are normally resident and/or employed; and (c) there are

appropriate reliable means of communication through which the candidate can maintain regular and frequent contact with his/her RUSVM supervisor(s).

In exceptional circumstances, RUSVM may reduce the residence requirements for candidates for research degrees to a total period of not less than two (2) months, provided:

- It is demonstrated that the subject of study fits particularly well with the research interests of RUSVM and supervisor(s);
- It is clearly demonstrated that a suitable research project has been devised without the need to spend several months' residence in St. Kitts;
- There is demonstrable evidence of suitable research facilities where the candidate is normally a resident and/or employed;
- There are appropriate and reliable means of communication through which the candidate can maintain regular and frequent contact with the supervisor(s) at RUSVM; and
- The candidate already meets any requirements for training normally required of postgraduate research degree candidate in that subject.

#### **3.4.6.3      *Commencement Date of Postgraduate Research Degree Programs***

Enrollment for postgraduate research degree programs is on a rolling basis.

A commencement date for individual candidates shall be agreed by prior arrangement. If the candidate fails to commence their period of study by the agreed date, RUSVM reserves the right to retract any offer of admissions.

#### **3.4.6.4      *Transfer in Candidature***

RUSVM may permit transfer in candidature from the MSc by Research degree program to the PhD degree program. When such permission is granted, the candidate shall, in addition to satisfying the requirements for the PhD degree program, pursue such further course of study as RUSVM may require. Candidates transferring from registration in the MSc by Research degree program to the PhD degree program will be required to remain at RUSVM for such further period of study as RUSVM deems necessary. Except in exceptional circumstances, this further period of study shall be not less than two (2) years/six (6) semesters for the PhD degree program.

#### **3.4.6.5      *Continuing Candidates***

Candidates who have reached the end of their prescribed period of study but have not reached the end of their maximum permitted study period will be registered as continuing candidates.

No tuition and fees are due during the continuing candidate phase.

Continuing candidates are expected to be undertaking analysis and thesis writing as their main



activities in relation to their postgraduate research degree program.

#### **3.4.6.6 Confirmation of Candidature Report and Annual Reports**

PhD and MSc by Research degree program progress monitoring is assessed at defined 'milestones:'

- 1) Study plan completion;
- 2) Confirmation of candidature (also referred to as the interim review);
- 3) Annual reports (for degree programs longer than one year); and
- 4) Prior to thesis submission.

These reports must be approved by the Director of Postgraduate Studies and then submitted to the Postgraduate and Research Committee for information. Template forms for all progress monitoring are available in the RUSVM Good Practice Framework for Postgraduate Studies.

Individual milestones are described in the RUSVM Postgraduate Assessment Regulations. Progress reports are used as the basis, amongst other things, for:

- Confirming that any conditions of registration detailed in Section 3.2.3 Selection and Admission have been met;
- Confirming or proposing the precise area in which a candidate's work is developing, and
- Administrative withdrawal of registration. When administrative withdrawal is recommended by a supervisor, he/she must obtain the comments of Director of Postgraduate Studies, who is responsible for notifying the candidate that withdrawal has been recommended. The candidate is then given an opportunity to submit his/her views to the Postgraduate and Research Committee before it reaches a decision as to whether or not the candidate's studies should be withdrawn. The candidate may appeal the administrative withdrawal of his/her degree by written appeal to the Director of Postgraduate Studies who will bring it to the Academic Review Committee, a standing committee of the RUSVM. The Academic Review Committee will make a recommendation to the Dean.

#### **3.4.6.7 Transfers from another Institution**

The research studies of candidates who apply to transfer from another institution in order to complete the MSc by Research or PhD degree programs at RUSVM may be counted towards the prescribed period of study for the degree. In such cases the prescribed period of study at RUSVM shall be not less than one (1) year/three (3) semesters. Transfer from another institution onto the PhD by Research Publications is not possible.

Candidates whose prescribed period of study has concluded shall thereafter be registered as continuing candidates during the remainder of their permitted period of study.

#### **3.4.6.8 Submission of Thesis**

Candidates must submit their thesis as soon as possible after the end of their prescribed period of study. The thesis must be submitted within a maximum period of three (3) months for full-time degree

program candidates and six (6) months for part-time degree program candidates after the completion of their prescribed period of study.

#### **3.4.6.9        *Failure to Submit a Thesis***

Candidates who fail to submit a thesis by the deadline specified in these Regulations will be deemed to have withdrawn and will have their registration recorded as lapsed.

Prior to allowing a candidate's registration to lapse the Postgraduate and Research Committee will write to the candidate to inform him/her of the proposed course of action and to invite him/her to provide any comment on the lapsing of his/her studies.

#### **3.4.6.10       *Lapsed Registration***

A candidate whose registration has lapsed will be entitled to ask RUSVM to reinstate his/her registration at a later date to permit examination of a completed thesis.

A decision as to whether or not a candidate should be reinstated will be taken by the Postgraduate and Research Committee, and factors such as the passage of time and its implications for the topic of study will be taken into account. If, exceptionally, reinstatement is approved, the candidate's thesis will be examined in the normal way, subject to payment of a reinstatement and examination fee.

During the period between lapse of registration as a candidate and reinstatement, the candidate ceases to be a candidate and is accordingly not entitled to any supervision or access to RUSVM facilities.

### **3.4.7 MSc by Research Degree Program Requirements**

Progress monitoring is conducted throughout the study period and the candidate will be asked to demonstrate satisfactory progress at set milestones.

The award of an MSc by Research degree is based on the satisfactory completion of research training in addition to any other designated projects, assignments, and/or course work, and the completion of a thesis, which must not exceed 30,000 words.

Candidates will be required to demonstrate that they have acquired an advanced level of knowledge and understanding in the field of study and are capable of undertaking independent research.

#### **3.4.7.1        *Prescribed Period of Study***

The Postgraduate and Research Committee shall prescribe the duration of each candidate's minimum

period of full-time or part-time study at the time of the candidate's admission.

The minimum period of study prescribed for full-time MSc by Research degree program candidates is one (1) year/three (3) semesters. The minimum period of study prescribed for part-time MSc by Research degree program candidates is two (2) years/six (6) semesters.

Any MSc by Research degree program, part-time or full-time, which are designed to be longer than the prescribed period require the approval of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

Under no circumstances will the maximum period of study for MSc by Research program exceed four (4) semesters for full-time study and nine (9) semesters for part-time study.

Members of faculty and candidates holding a research appointment under the auspices of RUSVM may be registered for a minimum period of two (2) years/six (6) semesters part-time.

#### **3.4.7.2        *The Grounds for Award of the MSc by Research Degree are:***

- i. The award of an MSc by Research degree is made according to the Postgraduate Research Degree Program Assessment Regulations (Section 3.4.9);
- ii. The candidate must have demonstrated by the presentation of a dissertation that he/she has acquired: an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the discipline informed by current scholarship and research, including a critical awareness of current issues and developments in the subject; the ability to study independently in the subject; the ability to use a range of techniques and research methods applicable to advanced scholarship in the subject; the ability to apply research to professional situations, both practical and theoretical; and the ability to use a range of techniques and research methods applicable to their professional activities; and
- iii. The thesis must be an original work making a significant contribution to knowledge in, or understanding of, the field of study and containing material worthy of publication; show adequate knowledge of the field of study and relevant literature; show the exercise of critical judgment with regard to both the candidate's work and that of other scholars in the same general field; contain material which presents a unified body of work such as could reasonably be achieved on the basis of one year/3 semesters (full-time) of postgraduate study and research; be satisfactory in its literary presentation; give full and adequate references; and have a coherent structure understandable to a scholar in the same general field with regard to intentions, background, methods and conclusions.

#### **3.4.7.3        *Length of Thesis***

The Masters by Research degree program thesis must not exceed 30,000 words. In exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the supervisor, permission may be granted by the Postgraduate and Research Committee to exceed the stated length on the grounds that such extension is required for adequate treatment of the thesis topic. The thesis must include a lay summary, which is not counted in the word count.

#### **3.4.7.4 Consecutive Registration**

MSc by Research degree program candidates may, on the recommendation of the Postgraduate and Research Committee and at the point of offer of admission and/or by the point of first enrollment for the MSc by Research degree program, be registered (either full-time or part-time) for consecutive MSc by Research, followed by the PhD degree program. Progress is assessed by the end of semester two of the MSc by Research degree program and, depending on the outcome, the candidate will be invited to follow one of three routes:

- i. Submission of a dissertation for the MSc by Research degree at the end of the first year followed, if successful in the MSc by Research degree program, by registration in the next academic session on the first year of the PhD degree program;
- ii. No submission of a dissertation for the MSc by Research at the end of the first year but transfer of candidature to the PhD degree program such that the next academic session will constitute the second year of the PhD program; or
- iii. Submission of a dissertation for the MSc by Research degree program at the end of the first year and permanent withdrawal.

Candidates following the first route, may, subject to exceptional academic performance, with the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor and the approval of the Postgraduate and Research Committee, submit their PhD thesis up to one year/three semesters before the end date of the PhD program prescribed period of study.

### **3.4.8 Doctoral (PhD) Degree Program Requirements**

Progress monitoring is conducted throughout the study period and the candidate will be asked to demonstrate satisfactory progress at set milestones.

Research supervisors will submit a yearly progress report to the Postgraduate and Research Committee on the work of the candidate. Information to be provided in the progress report will include advancement of the research, development of discipline specific research skills and progress in expected outcomes (e.g. manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals).

The candidate must have demonstrated the capacity to pursue original research in the field of study and to present the results in a critical and scholarly way. The doctoral dissertation must be an original work making a significant contribution to knowledge and understanding of the field of study, such that it is worthy of presentation in peer reviewed publications.

The award of a PhD is determined on the basis of a submitted thesis, not exceeding 100,000 words, and an externally-assessed oral examination.

#### **3.4.8.1 PhD Prescribed Period of Study**

The Postgraduate and Research Committee shall prescribe the duration of each candidate's minimum

period of full-time or part-time study at the time of the candidate's admission.

The minimum period of study prescribed for full-time PhD degree program candidates is normally three (3) years/nine (9) semesters. The period of study prescribed for part-time PhD degree program candidates is six (6) years/eighteen (18) semesters.

Any PhD degree program, part-time or full-time which are designed to be longer than the prescribed period of study require the approval of the Postgraduate and Research Committee. Members of RUSVM faculty and candidates holding a research appointment under the auspices of RUSVM may be registered for a minimum period of three (3) years/nine (9) semesters part-time.

#### **3.4.8.2      *Reductions to the prescribed period***

In the case of a specific recommendation in the first-year progress report, or subsequently, the Postgraduate and Research Committee may reduce the prescribed period by up to three (3) years/nine (9) semesters for part-time PhD degree candidates. Reductions to the prescribed period are not available to those members of faculty who are registered for the minimum period of three (3) years/nine (9) semesters.

#### **3.4.8.3      *Authorized Interruption of Study***

Registration during the prescribed period of study may be interrupted by RUSVM for a specified period, if good cause is shown. The total period of authorized interruption of study for any candidate may not exceed five years. No fees are payable during any full year in which authorized interruption of study has been continuous. Authorized interruptions of study are not permitted for candidates on the MSc by Research or PhD by Research Publications degree programs.

#### **3.4.8.4      *The Grounds for Award of the PhD Degree are:***

- i. The award of a PhD degree is made according to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations;
- ii. The candidate must have demonstrated by the presentation of a dissertation and by performance at an oral examination (unless, due to exceptional circumstances, this is waived) that the candidate is capable of pursuing original research in the field of study, relating particular research projects to the general body of knowledge in the field, and presenting the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way; and
- iii. The thesis must be an original work making a significant contribution to knowledge in, or understanding of, the field of study and containing material worthy of publication; show adequate knowledge of the field of study and relevant literature; show the exercise of critical judgment with regard to both the candidate's work and that of other scholars in the same general field; contain material which presents a unified body of work such as could reasonably be achieved on the basis of three years of postgraduate study and research; be

satisfactory in its literary presentation; give full and adequate references; and have a coherent structure understandable to a scholar in the same general field with regard to intentions, background, methods and conclusions.

#### **3.4.8.5      *Length of Thesis***

The PhD degree program thesis must not exceed 100,000 words. In exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the supervisor, permission may be granted by the Postgraduate Studies Committee to exceed the stated length on the ground that such extension is required for adequate treatment of the thesis topic. The thesis must include a lay summary, which is not counted in the word count.

#### **3.4.8.6      *PhD by Research Publications Degree Program***

The PhD by Research Publications degree program is subject to the same regulations as the PhD degree program with the addition of the eligibility criteria of candidates and the grounds for award (Section 3.4.8.4 The Grounds for Award of the Degree of PhD):

- Applicants who are graduates of RUSVM or who are current members of faculty of RUSVM, may, at the discretion of the Postgraduate and Research Committee, be allowed to apply for the award of the degree of PhD by Research Publications;
- Applicants must be either graduates of RUSVM of at least five years' standing; or members of faculty of RUSVM of not less than three years' standing;
- Applicants should have been active postgraduate researchers in their field of expertise for a minimum of five years before seeking permission to register for this degree program, and they should not submit material published more than ten years prior to the date when they are given permission to register for the degree program;
- Permission to register will not normally be granted to applicants who are in a position to submit for the PhD by Research Publications degree program or who already possess a PhD degree;
- Applicants must first apply to the Postgraduate and Research Committee to seek approval for their candidature before they can submit their work for formal examination. At the same time as lodging their application, applicants will be expected to submit their published work and a 500- word synopsis outlining the extent, range, quality and coherence of their submission;
- When an applicant has notified RUSVM of a desire to apply for this degree program, RUSVM will appoint a suitably qualified member of staff to advise on whether there is a prima facie case for the registration to be approved; and
- Upon registration, an adviser will be appointed to advise the candidate on the selection, coherence and quality of the portfolio of research work to be submitted and on the nature of the accompanying abstract and critical review.

##### **3.4.8.6.1      *Grounds for the award of PhD by Research Publications***

The grounds for award of a PhD by Research Publications are:

- i. The submission of a portfolio of published work judged satisfactory by the examiners and a satisfactory performance at an oral examination;
- ii. The submitted portfolio of published research must add up to a substantial and coherent body of work which would have taken a diligent candidate the equivalent of three years of

full-time study to accomplish, which makes a significant contribution to knowledge in or understanding of the candidate's field of study, and which is of a scholarly standard normally expected of a candidate who submits a PhD dissertation; and

- iii. Candidates must either be the sole author of the portfolio of published work or must be able to demonstrate in the critical review of the submitted work that they have made a major contribution to all of the work that has been produced by more than one author.

### **3.4.9 Postgraduate Research Degree Program Assessment Regulations**

#### **3.4.9.1 Introduction**

These regulations set out the rules which must be followed for the assessment of all postgraduate research degrees, namely the MSc by Research, the PhD and the PhD by Research Publications. Separate policies are in place for the credit-based MSc in One Health degree program, as there is typically no or little coursework required for postgraduate research degrees.

Students and faculty who need additional guidance may consult the Director of Postgraduate Studies and/or the Postgraduate & Research Administrator (postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn).

These research assessment regulations, and related RUSVM practices, are guided by the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B11: Research Degrees.

#### **3.4.9.2 Examiners: appointment**

Examiners are appointed by Director of Postgraduate Studies, upon recommendation from the supervisory team. There are internal examiners, who are RUSVM faculty, and external examiners. External examiners are appropriately-qualified experts in the topic to be examined. External examiners may be members of faculty in higher education institutions, public sector organizations or non-educational private sector organizations.

Upon receipt of a candidate's Notice of Intention to Submit form, the Postgraduate and Research Administrator will contact the Director of Postgraduate Studies to request that examiners are nominated for the examination of the thesis or the submitted assessment.

Supervisors inform candidates of the names of possible examiners, and candidates must inform their supervisor if any problems are likely to arise if particular examiners are appointed. Any comments will be taken into account but candidates have no right to determine the Director of Postgraduate Studies' eventual nomination, and therefore have no right to veto any particular appointment.

The external examiner will be approached informally by the Director of Postgraduate Studies to establish their willingness to participate. However, the Postgraduate and Research Committee has responsibility for the approval of all examiners. Any objection to the proposed examiners must be made to the Postgraduate and Research Committee in good time before the relevant assessment. Complete final lists of examiners are maintained by the Postgraduate and Research Committee.



No person who has held an appointment on the teaching or research faculty or has been a candidate or student of RUSVM, or who is an adjunct member of faculty at RUSVM, is eligible to act as an external examiner until a period of four years has elapsed since the termination of the appointment or the status.

Internal examiners are academic and/or honorary/adjunct faculty of RUSVM. Faculty who are, or who have been, a supervisor of the candidate cannot be an internal examiner for that candidate. Members of affiliated or associated institutions may be internal but not external examiners.

The Postgraduate and Research Administrator must inform the candidate of the names of his/her examiners when the examiners have been approved by the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

If there is more than three months between the examiners being appointed and the candidate submitting the thesis, the Director of Postgraduate Studies has responsibility for checking whether the commitments of any examiner have changed significantly so that consideration may be given to appointing an alternative examiner.

Each candidate is assessed by at least one external examiner and one internal examiner. In particular cases, such as the examination of an interdisciplinary topic, a second external examiner may be appointed.

When the candidate is or has been a member of faculty/staff of RUSVM during his/her research degree there must be two external examiners and one internal examiner. There is no requirement for candidates who are or have been tutors or demonstrators (or have undertaken similar roles) to have two external examiners.

#### **3.4.9.3      *Examiners: responsibilities***

Examiners must have the requisite experience to examine the postgraduate research degree programs at the level at which it is offered. They must have good knowledge of the expected outcomes and the grounds for awarding the degree and level they are examining; and comply with quality and standards requirements.

The Director of Postgraduate Studies will specify responsibilities and requirements to examiners as well as provide access to relevant policies and guidelines.

It is the responsibility of the Postgraduate and Research Committee to ensure that the external examiner is competent to assess the degree. The external examiner is appointed for his/her specialist knowledge, whereas the internal examiner may be a generalist or an expert in only part of the subject



matter of the thesis.

No member of the RUSVM faculty, internal examiner or external examiner shall be involved in any assessment or examination in which he/she has a personal interest, for example a current or previous personal, family or legal relationship with a candidate being assessed.

#### **3.4.9.4      *Conduct of Assessment***

It is a candidate's responsibility to be aware of the assessment practices and requirements for the degree program. The grounds for the award of research degrees are provided in Section 3.4.7.2 Grounds for Award of the MSc by Research Degree, Section 3.4.8.4 Grounds for Award of the PhD Degree, and 3.4.8.6 PhD by Research Publications Degree Program. It is a candidate's responsibility to meet his/her assessment deadlines, including thesis submission deadlines and oral examination times and location. It is a supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the candidate is informed of all assessment requirements.

Each research candidate is allocated a Progress Monitoring Committee which comprises the RUSVM supervisors, external supervisors (if applicable) and one member of faculty not associated with the research project. The Progress Monitoring Committee is chaired by one of its members but not the Principal Supervisor. In practice, this is typically the member of RUSVM faculty not associated with the research project.

#### **3.4.9.5      *Research candidate milestones***

Research candidate progress monitoring is assessed at defined 'milestones': shortly after commencement; Confirmation of Candidature; annual reports; review by the Progress Monitoring Committee prior to intention to submit; and thesis submission, followed by examination by internal and external examiners.

These milestones will take place at different times according to the degree program and the mode of study:

- Study plan completion: typically in the first semester, the study plan completion is completed in collaboration with the supervisors;
- Confirmation of candidature, carried out by the Progress Monitoring Committee;
- Decisions are based upon a candidate presentation and a meeting of the Progress Monitoring Committee, including a closed-door discussion with the candidate;
- Annual reports are to be returned to the Progress Monitoring Committee, based upon the premise that the candidate and the supervisors have formally met at least twice a year. These reports are submitted to the Progress Monitoring Committee (on the anniversary of the candidate's registering – not applicable for degrees of 1-year in duration or less). These

reports are assessed and commented on by members of the Progress Monitoring Committee prior to submitting recommendations to the Director of Postgraduate Studies;

- Final review by the Progress Monitoring Committee, before the candidate's submission of their intention to submit; and
- Final assessment of the thesis is done by internal and external examiners and consists of:
  - Thesis review only for MSc by Research; and
  - Thesis review and a closed-door oral examination for PhD and PhD by Research Publications degree candidates.

Template forms for progress monitoring and recording of assessment at milestones are available on request from the Research and Postgraduate Administrator (postgrad@rossvet.edu.kn).

#### *3.4.9.5.1 Confirmation of Candidature*

The Confirmation of Candidature consists of a public seminar delivered by the candidate to present his/her proposed thesis work and a substantive piece of writing related to his/her project.

The timelines for Confirmation of Candidature are as follows:

- For MSc by Research degree program, Full-time: in first semester after commencement;
- For MSc by Research degree program, Part-time: in second semester after commencement;
- For PhD and PhD by Research Publications degree program, Full-time: before the end of second semester after commencement; and
- For PhD and PhD by Research Publications degree program, Part-time: before the end of third semester after commencement.

The Progress Monitoring Committee will meet with the candidate after the seminar to review his/her progress and to provide feedback on the project proposal, supervisory arrangements and resources available. The candidate and the Progress Monitoring Committee should complete the Confirmation of Candidature Report after the meeting.

#### *3.4.9.5.2 Confirmation of Candidature Recommendation*

The Progress Monitoring Committee will make one of the following recommendations after the Confirmation of Candidature to the Director of Postgraduate Studies:

- confirmation of registration for the MSc by Research, PhD, or PhD by Research Publications degree program, as appropriate;
- repeat review must be undertaken and a plan of action completed before confirmation of registration; or
- registration for a lower degree such as MSc by Research degree program (for PhD and PhD by Research Publications degree program candidates only).

#### *3.4.9.5.3 Repeat Confirmation of Candidature*

If the Confirmation of Candidature indicates some concerns about a candidate's progress then a repeat review must be undertaken within one month for MSc by Research and three months for PhD or PhD by Research Publications candidates.

#### **3.4.9.6      *Annual Reviews (applies only to degrees longer than one year)***

The Progress Monitoring Committee will undertake annual reviews on or around the anniversary of the candidate's registration date.

If necessary, the Progress Monitoring Committee will meet with the candidate to discuss the research, completed training, further training needs, supervisory arrangements, resources available and any concerns that have arisen in the preceding year.

The Progress Monitoring Committee will make one of the following recommendations after the Annual Review to the Director of Postgraduate Studies:

- continuation of registration for MSc by Research, PhD, or PhD by Research Publications degree programs, as appropriate;
- Remedial plan of action to bring the candidate's progress to a satisfactory level and/or extension of the prescribed period of study;
- registration for a lower degree such as MSc by Research degree (for PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree candidates only); or
- candidature should be administratively withdrawn due to unsatisfactory progress.

#### **3.4.9.7      *Final Review Prior to Intention to Submit***

The Progress Monitoring Committee will undertake a final review prior to the candidate notifying RUSVM of his/her intention to submit his/her thesis for examination. The Progress Monitoring Committee will meet with the candidate to discuss the research project and outcomes, completed training, exposure to the wider research community, dissemination of the research, proposed or submitted publications in peer-reviewed journals and the preparation of the thesis. The Progress Monitoring Committee will make one of the following recommendations after the review to the Director of Postgraduate Studies:

- the candidate can notify of his/her intention to submit;
- remedial plan of action to bring the candidate's progress to a satisfactory level and/or extension of the prescribed period of study; or
- registration for a lower degree such as MSc by Research degree (for PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree candidates only).

#### **3.4.9.8      *Notification of intention to submit a thesis for examination***

Candidates must notify their Supervisor and the Postgraduate and Research Committee of their intention to submit their work for examination at least 1 month for a MSc by Research degree program and 2 months for a PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree program before the thesis is submitted.

### **3.4.9.9      *Deadlines for the submission of a thesis***

Candidates must submit their thesis as soon as possible after the end of their prescribed period of study(excluding any periods of authorized interruption of studies). The thesis must be submitted within:

- a maximum period of three (3) months for full-time MSc by Research degree program after the completion of the prescribed period of study;
- a maximum period of six (6) months for part-time MSc by Research degree program after the completion of the prescribed period of study;
- for all PhD degree program regardless of study mode, a maximum period of twelve (12) months after the completion of the prescribed period of study, unless, in exceptional circumstances, an extension is granted by the Postgraduate and Research Committee; or
- three to twelve (3-12) months of registration for PhD by Research Publications degree program.

At least two, soft-bound copies of each thesis containing an abstract and one electronic copy of each thesis, abstract and lay summary must be submitted to the Postgraduate and Research Committee. If more than two examiners are appointed then additional copies of the thesis will be required.

Thesis formatting must follow the guidelines outlined in Sections 3.4.7.3 Length of Thesis and 3.4.8.5 Length of Thesis, in addition to any stipulation by the Progress Monitoring Committee.

Upon receipt of the copies of the thesis, the Postgraduate and Research Committee will transmit the thesis and the examination report forms to the examiners.

### **3.4.9.10      *Early submission***

Any candidate wishing to submit his/her thesis earlier than three (3) months prior to the end of the prescribed period of study must have the permission of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

The candidate must discuss early submission with his/her supervisor. The Director of Postgraduate Studies are unlikely to approve early submission without the agreement of the Principal Supervisor.

### **3.4.9.11      *Oral assessment***

Oral assessment will only be applicable to PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree program candidates. Only in exceptional circumstances, oral assessment will be conducted for the examination of MSc by Research degree program candidates. All examiners must participate in any oral examination of the candidate.

The oral examination may be used to establish a candidate's knowledge of the field of his/her research, to establish the extent of any collaboration and to confirm that the work is the candidate's own. Through the oral examination, the examiners are assessing jointly whether the thesis, and the candidate's defense of the thesis, satisfy the requirements and regulations for the award of the degree.

Oral assessment may be conducted using technology such as video conferencing or Skype, enabling the candidate or an examiner to participate but not be physically present at RUSVM.

The internal examiner is responsible for ensuring that all the necessary arrangements for the oral examination are made. The arrangements, including the date and place of the oral examination, the chairing of it, and the names of all those participating in it, must be provided in advance to all those who are to be present.

If an examiner is unable to participate in the oral examination, it may be postponed to a later date. If postponement would be a serious hardship to the candidate, the Postgraduate and Research Committee will consider appointing an alternative examiner.

The supervisors may attend the oral examination as observers, providing the candidate and examiners consent to this. On such occasions supervisors will not comment. Supervisors must leave the examination room with the candidate. Supervisors are not entitled to participate in the discussion and decision of the examiners.

#### **3.4.9.12        *Failure to submit assessed work***

Candidates who fail to submit their assessed work by any specified deadline will be excluded for unsatisfactory academic progress.

#### **3.4.9.13        *Thesis Regulations (applies to all postgraduate research degree programs)***

##### **3.4.9.13.1        *Anti-plagiarism software***

Candidates must provide evidence that their work has been checked through an anti-plagiarism software approved by RUSVM, such as Turnitin.

##### **3.4.9.13.2        *Copyright***

The candidate holds copyright as author of all work submitted for examination. Each candidate grants RUSVM the right to publish the thesis, abstract or list of works, and/or to authorize its publication for any scholarly purpose with proper acknowledgement of authorship. During the examination the examiners must hold the thesis and the abstract in strict confidence.

##### **3.4.9.13.3        *Thesis title***

The candidate must provide a thesis title with the Intention to Submit Form (Currently in draft) which will be the final title for the thesis.

#### *3.4.9.13.4 Thesis length*

The thesis must not exceed 100,000 words for PhD degree programs and 30,000 words for MSc by Research degree programs.

In exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor, permission may be granted by the Postgraduate and Research Committee to exceed the stated length on the grounds that such extension is required for adequate treatment of the thesis topic.

The thesis must include a lay summary, which is not counted in the word count.

#### *3.4.9.13.5 Previously published material*

Where material to be included in a thesis has been published before the thesis is submitted, the candidate must acknowledge the fact of such publication. The portfolio of published work submitted for the PhD by Research Publications degree program must be accompanied by an abstract and also by a general critical review of all the submitted work.

This critical review must summarize the aims, objectives, methodology, results and conclusions covered by all the work submitted in the portfolio. It must also indicate how the publications form a coherent body of work, what contribution the candidate has made to this work, and how the work contributes significantly to the expansion of knowledge.

#### *3.4.9.13.6 Work previously submitted*

Candidates must not include in their work submitted for examination any work which has been submitted previously to gain a degree or professional qualification. Where work is resubmitted for a lower degree, the requirements of the relevant degree apply.

#### *3.4.9.13.7 Signed Declaration*

Every candidate must incorporate a signed declaration form in the thesis submitted for examination, stating:

- that the thesis has been composed by the candidate;
- either that the work is the candidate's own, or, if the candidate has been a member of a research group, that the candidate has made a substantial contribution to the work, such contribution being clearly indicated; and
- that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified.

#### **3.4.9.14. Examiners' Reports**

The Postgraduate and Research Committee will send the thesis to the examiners who must each submit a written report (Part I) in advance of the oral examination.

The examiners must not consult with each other in completing their preliminary report. After the oral examination (PhD and PhD by Research Publications degree program only) the examiners will submit

a joint report (Part II).

MSc by Research degree program theses are normally examined through a one-stage process in which each examiner, acting independently, submits a report on the thesis as per Section 3.4.9.15 MSc by Research degree program: Thesis Examination.

PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree program theses are examined through a two-stage process in which each examiner, acting independently, submits an initial report on the thesis before the oral examination is held to the Postgraduate and Research Committee, as per Section 3.4.9.16 PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree programs: Thesis Examination. Following the oral examination, the examiners are asked to submit a joint report on the thesis. Examiners submit their own Part I reports and the internal examiner is responsible for sending the Part II report to the Postgraduate and Research Committee. The forms are available online.

The expectation is that examiners will complete their Part I report within two to three (2-3) months of receipt of the thesis. The Part II report should be completed directly after the oral examination and sent to the Postgraduate and Research Committee within two (2) weeks of the oral examination.

In the unlikely event of examiners failing to reach agreement, separate recommendations may be made and will be subject to arbitration by the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

#### **3.4.9.15      *MSc by Research degree program: Thesis Examination***

The examiners must report on the candidate's thesis to the Postgraduate and Research Committee and provide separate recommendations on the prescribed form.

The Postgraduate and Research Committee must either confirm the examiners' recommendation and transmit it to the Dean without further comment or for stated reasons make a different recommendation to the Dean, including, where appropriate, examination by different examiners.

The Postgraduate and Research Committee, on receipt of a recommendation by the examiners, must consider whether it appears to be adequately justified in the light of the full reports by the examiners, and may make further inquiry of the examiners and the candidate's supervisor(s).

If the Postgraduate and Research Committee receives reports by the examiners indicating disagreement as to the appropriate recommendation, it may recommend to the Dean that the recommendation of one of the examiners be accepted in preference to that of the other. The Postgraduate and Research Committee may require that a further report on the thesis be obtained from some other examiner or examiners, or that the examination of the thesis be conducted from the beginning by different examiners.

Minor (editorial) revisions are allowed and may be reviewed only by the internal examiner in



agreement with the external examiner. Major revisions of the thesis with re-submission are not permitted in the case of the MSc by Research degree program unless a special case has been submitted to, and approved by, the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

#### **3.4.9.16      *PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree programs: Thesis Examination***

The examiners will hold an oral examination to assess a PhD or PhD by Research Publications degree program thesis.

At the end of the oral examination, the examiners may, if they have agreed on a recommendation, indicate their recommendation to the candidate. The examiners must stress, however, that their recommendation is not final but will form the basis of the Part II report.

#### **3.4.9.17      *PhD: Examiners' report following oral examination***

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one (1) of the following recommendations to the Postgraduate and Research Committee:

- Minor Corrections. The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor deficiencies in the thesis must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the candidate will be able to remedy these without further supervision and without undertaking any further original research. The corrections must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the internal examiner(s), and by the external examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded;
- Deficiencies in Oral Examination. The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor deficiencies, but the doctoral candidate's oral defense of the thesis has been deficient in specified respects. The candidate is required to undergo further examination, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. The degree is awarded subject to the candidate achieving a satisfactory standard in the further examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the internal examiner(s), and by the external examiner (where the examiner so requests);
- Deficiencies in Thesis. No Oral Re-Examination needed. The thesis is significantly deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree, but the candidate appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study of no more than twelve (12) months and is subject to certification by the internal examiner(s), and by the external examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded;
- Major Deficiencies. Resubmission for Doctoral degree. The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree, but the candidate appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The candidate should be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a specified period of study of no more than twenty-four (24) months;
- Award MSc by Research degree. The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements, but the thesis satisfies the requirements for the Master of Science by Research degree;



- Award MSc by Research degree following minor corrections. No thesis resubmission is necessary. The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis satisfies the requirements for the MSc by Research degree except for stated minor deficiencies in the thesis. The candidate should be invited to carry out the specified minor corrections as indicated by the examiners. The corrections must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the internal examiner(s), and by the external examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded;
- Major Deficiencies. Resubmission for MSc by Research degree. The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis may satisfy the requirements for the MSc by Research degree if stated deficiencies in the thesis are rectified. Accordingly, the candidate should be invited to resubmit the thesis in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners for the MSc by Research degree. The revisions should be completed within a further period which must not exceed twelve (12) months; or
- Fail. The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree requirements.

Candidates may not be invited to resubmit the thesis more than once.

The Postgraduate and Research Committee is responsible for ensuring that the candidate receives a written statement of any revisions to be made to the thesis. The Principal Supervisor must confirm with the candidate his/her understanding of any revisions to be made.

Where a lower degree is awarded then the original word limits for the lower degree are set aside.

#### **3.4.9.18      *PhD by Research Publications degree program: Examiners' report following oral examination***

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one (1) of the following recommendations to the Postgraduate and Research Committee:

- ***Award the doctoral degree.*** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the PhD by Research Publications degree as described in the Postgraduate Degree Regulations and the degree should accordingly to be awarded;
- ***Minor Corrections.*** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor deficiencies in the thesis must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the candidate will be able to remedy these without further supervision and without undertaking any further original research. The corrections must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the internal examiner(s), and by the external examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded;

- **Deficiencies in Oral Examination.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor deficiencies, but the candidate's oral defense of the thesis has been deficient in specified respects. The candidate is required to undergo further examination, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. The degree is awarded subject to the candidate achieving a satisfactory standard in the further examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the internal examiner(s), and by the external examiner (where the examiner so requests);
- **Deficiencies in Thesis. No Oral Re-Examination needed.** The thesis is significantly deficient in one or more of the requirements for the PhD by Research Publications degree, but the candidate appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study of no more than twelve (12) months and is subject to certification by the internal examiner(s), and by the external examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded;
- **Major Deficiencies.** Resubmission for PhD by Research Publications degree. The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the PhD by Research Publications degree, but the candidate appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The candidate should be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a specified period of study of no more than twenty-four (24) months; or
- **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the PhD by Research Publications degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree.

The Postgraduate and Research Committee is responsible for ensuring that the candidate receives a written statement of any revisions to be made to the thesis. The Principal supervisor must confirm with the candidate his/her understanding of any revisions to be made.

#### **3.4.9.19      *Final version of the thesis (does not apply to Master of Science by Research degree program)***

A candidate cannot graduate until he/she has submitted the final version of his/her thesis to the Postgraduate and Research Committee. Candidates may not be invited to resubmit the thesis more than once.

#### **3.4.9.20      *Security of assessment***

Assessed work must be handled, transported, recorded and stored securely. RUSVM has responsibility for the security of arrangements. In practice, the operation of this may be delegated to the Postgraduate and Research Committee and DeVry Medical International, located in New Jersey as the holder of the candidate records.

Security arrangements must also include correspondence about assessment, which may be by email.

##### **3.4.9.20.1      *Approval of assessment decisions***

The Postgraduate and Research Committee discusses the examiners' reports and decides whether or not to approve the recommendations made by the examiners.

Prior to the meeting of the Postgraduate and Research Committee, examiners' recommendations are provisional until approved or modified by the Postgraduate and Research Committee. The examiners for individual candidates do not participate in any assessment decisions regarding these candidates in the relevant meeting of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

The minutes of the Postgraduate and Research Committee meeting is a confidential document although information on a particular candidate may need to be disclosed to that candidate under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and generic information may need to be disclosed under other regulatory requirements.

The assessment results that are submitted to the Office of the Registrar for RUSVM located at the DeVry Medical International Administrative Offices are the official results.

#### *3.4.9.20.2 Quorum for assessment decisions*

Provided reasonable notice of a meeting has been given, a meeting is properly constituted and empowered to act if at least three academic members (including one of the co-chairs) are present.

The Chairs of the Postgraduate and Research Committee may, at their discretion, invite any person who has been involved in the assessment of the work under consideration by the Postgraduate and Research Committee to be present 'in attendance' but without voting rights.

#### **3.4.9.21 Confidentiality**

All discussion about the assessment of an individual candidate at a Postgraduate and Research Committee meeting is confidential.

The Postgraduate and Research Committee must reach a collective decision. The decision does not need to be unanimous.

The views of a particular Postgraduate and Research Committee member should not be made known to a candidate. If a candidate makes a request, comments should be anonymized, e.g. assigned to Member 1, Member 2.

#### **3.4.9.22 Award of degrees**

Degrees are awarded by the Dean on the basis of recommendations of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

#### **3.4.9.23 Return of Decision**

Decisions and awards recommended by the examiners and confirmed by the Postgraduate and

Research Committee must be recorded on the Student Information System (Banner) as the final official results of RUSVM.

MSc by Research degree program candidates receive notification of the outcome of their thesis examination after the meeting of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

PhD and PhD by Research Publications degree program candidates receive Part II reports after the meeting of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

The decisions of the Postgraduate and Research Committee must be provided to the Postgraduate and Research Administrator as soon as possible and certainly no later than twenty-one (21) days before the date of graduation.

Notification of final results and the award of qualification to candidates, following the meeting of the Postgraduate and Research Committee, is the responsibility of the Postgraduate and Research Committee.

Because of the nature of postgraduate research degree programs, transcripts for such degrees are not issued by RUSVM.

#### **3.4.9.24        *Status of Decisions***

Decisions by the Postgraduate and Research Committee, once certified in writing, are final.

#### **3.4.9.25        *Appeal***

Candidates have the right of appeal against the decisions of the Postgraduate and Research Committee on specific grounds. Appeals may be submitted as per the procedure outlined in Section 1.14 Complaints against the University.